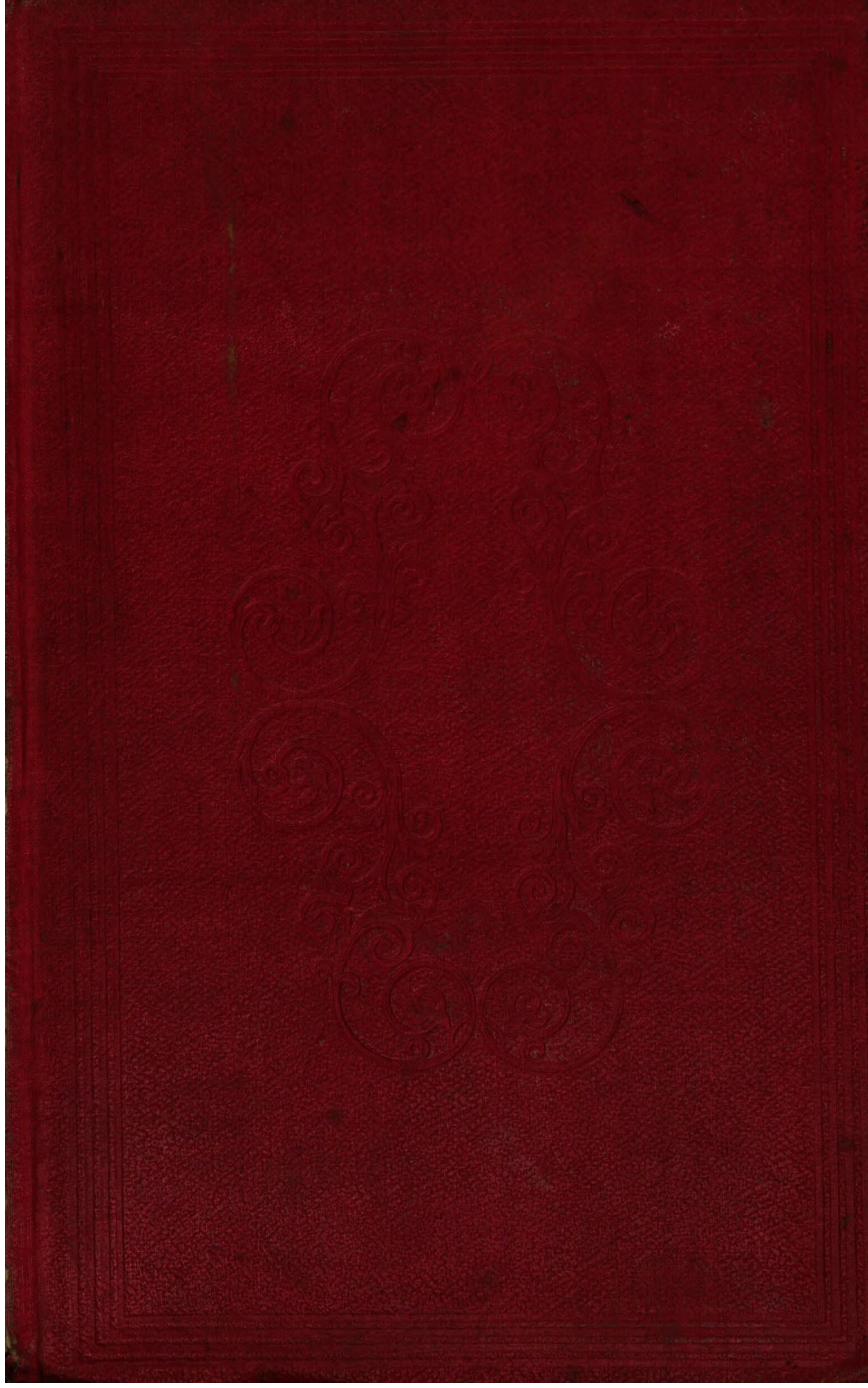




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(Shelley, Percy Bysshe)

Medwin

THE LIFE
OF
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

BY THOMAS MEDWIN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
THOMAS CAUTLEY NEWBY,

72, MORTIMER STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

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ERRATA.

- Page 29, line 15, for "Laotovos," read "*Laotonos.*"
Page 63, line 20, for "German," read "*Grecian.*"
Page 64, line 3, for "Cencis," read "*Cenci's.*"
Page 138, line 14, for "severely," read "*sensibly.*"
Page 173, line 11, after "I," omit the parentheses in the sentence.
Page 212, line 17, a comma instead of a full-point at the end of the line.
Page 213, line 4, for "met" read "*I met.*"
Page 253, line 4, for "Rimind" read "*Rimini;*" and in the last line, for "Beetinell" read "*Bettinello.*"
Page 254, line 17, for "sovrea" read "*sovra.*"

THE LIFE
OF
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

It was late in the autumn of 1820, when, at Shelley's invitation to pass the winter with him, I reached Pisa. I was not aware that he had gone to the Baths of St. Julian, and on enquiring for him, was referred for information to Lady Mount-Cashel, a lady whose retirement from the world was not unprofitable, for perhaps it was devoted to one of the best works on the Education of Children which we possess. She was one of the few persons with whom the Shelleys were intimate. She had been in early life the friend of Mary Wolstone-

craft, and this was the tie between them. An interesting and amiable person was Mrs. Mason, as she called herself, and from her I gained the desired intelligence, and the next day Shelley came to my hotel, the *Trè Donzelle*.

It was nearly seven years since we had parted, but I should immediately have recognised him in a crowd. His figure was emaciated, and somewhat bent, owing to near-sightedness, and his being forced to lean over his books, with his eyes almost touching them; his hair, still profuse, and curling naturally, was partially interspersed with grey; but his appearance was youthful, and his countenance, whether grave or animated, strikingly intellectual. There was also a freshness and purity in his complexion that he never lost. I accompanied him to the baths, then, owing to the lateness of the season, (it was November,) quite deserted,—for they are completely a summer resort; and there I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mrs. Shelley, and saw Percy, their little son, then an

infant. Their house was immediately on the banks of the Serchio, and on the very day of my arrival, that little, rapid river, or rather the canal that branches from it, overflowed its banks; no uncommon circumstance. It ran into the square, and formed a flood that threatened to cut off the communication with the main road to Pisa. Mrs. Shelley speaks of the event. Well do I remember the scene, which I stood with Shelley at the window to admire. The Contadine bore torches, and the groups of cattle, and the shouts of the drivers, the picturesque dresses of their wives, half immersed in the water, and carrying their children, and the dark mountains in the background, standing out in bold relief, formed a singular spectacle, well worthy of a painter's study. Shelley wished me to sketch it, but it was far beyond my powers of delineation,—besides that I had no colours. The next morning, the inundation having still continued to increase, the first floor was completely under water, and barring all egress, we were obliged to get a boat

from the upper windows, and drove to Pisa, where Shelley had already taken an apartment—a Terreno in the Casa, next door to the Marble Palace, with the enigmatical inscription, “Alla Giornata,” an inscription that has puzzled much the antiquary to explain, and with which title a Novel has been written, which I have never seen. Perhaps there is no mystery in “Alla Giornata,” which means, erected by day-work, instead of contract, the usual mode of building in Italy. But Shelley was inclined to think that there was some deep and mystical meaning in the words, and was but little satisfied with this prosaic interpretation, and deemed it was a tribute to the East, where the proprietor had past his best days, and made his colossal fortune. I have mentioned this magnificent palace, in order to identify the house where Shelley lived, the name of which has escaped me.

We here fixed ourselves for the winter, if such an expression be applicable to the divine climate of that gifted city, “where autumn

merges into spring, after but a few days of bleaker weather."

I was suffering from the effects of my abode in the East, and placed myself under the hands of the celebrated Vaccà, of whom Shelley and Lord Byron both speak with deserved praise.

During a long and severe attack of illness, aggravated by the fatigues of my journey from Geneva, Shelley tended me like a brother. He applied my leeches, administered my medicines, and during six weeks that I was confined to my room, was assiduous and unintermitting in his affectionate care of me,—care I shall never forget; most ungrateful should I indeed be, were it not indelibly stamped on my memory.

During this imprisonment, it was, that I first had an opportunity of reading his works, with many of which I was unacquainted. The delight they afforded me often disarmed pain. I loved to trace in them, from our crude attempts at rhyme, his earliest thoughts, associated as they were with the recollections of our boy-

hood; to follow the development of his genius. Nor was it only from his printed poems that I learned to estimate his surpassing talents, he lent me a MS. volume, containing his Ode to Liberty, The Sensitive Plant, the exquisite Arethusa and Peneus, and many other of his lyrics, which I devoured, and enthusiastically admired. He was surprised at my enthusiasm, and said to me,—“ I am disgusted with writing, and were it not for an irresistible impulse, that predominates my better reason, should discontinue so doing.” On such occasions, he fell into a despondent mood, most distressing to witness, was affected with a prostration of spirits that bent him to the earth, a melancholy too sacred to notice, and which it would have been a vain attempt to dissipate.

At other times perhaps, however, his features, that bore the impress of suffering, might have been false interpreters of the state of his mind, and his spirit might be lost in reverie, of which state it has been well said, that those subject to

it, are dissolved into the surrounding atmosphere, or feel as if the surrounding atmosphere were dissolved into their being. Something of this, I have more than once remarked in Shelley, as we stood watching from my open window in the upper part of the house, the sunsets of Pisa, which are gorgeous beyond any I have ever witnessed; when the waters, the sky, and the marble palaces that line the magnificent crescent of the Lung' Arno, were glowing with crimson—the river a flood of molten gold,—and I seem now to follow its course towards the *Ponte al Mare*, till the eye rested on the *Torre del Fame*, that frowned in dark relieve on the horizon. On such occasions, after one of these reveries, he would forget himself, lost in admiration, and exclaim,—“What a glorious world! There is, after all, something worth living for. This makes me retract the wish that I had never been born.”

Other feelings, besides those of disappointment, had tended at this time to wound his

sensitive spirit. Had it been the Quarterly Reviewer's object, as it undoubtedly was, to place Shelley under a ban—to drive him from the pale of society, he could not have adopted a course more suited to his diabolical purpose. From the time of the appearance of this article, if his friends did not forsake altogether, they, with few exceptions, fell off from him; and with a lacerated heart, only a few months after the appearance of the number, he writes:—"I am regarded by all who know, or hear of me, except I think on the whole *five* individuals, as a rare prodigy of crime and pollution, whose look even might infect. This *five* is a large computation, and I don't think I could name more than *three*." Who these exceptions were, he does not mention.

To show what the feeling of the English abroad was against him, in consequence of this vile attack, I will here repeat an anecdote, which I have already given to the world, and which must have highly gratified the re-

spectable contributor to the Quarterly. But a few weeks had elapsed, when a singular and dastardly outrage had been committed on Shelley. He was at the Post-office, asking for his letters, addressed, as is usual in Italy, *Poste-restante*, when a stranger in a military cloak, on hearing him pronounce his name, said, "What, are you that d——d atheist, Shelley?" and without more preamble, being a tall, powerful man, struck him such a blow that it felled him to the ground, and stunned him. On coming to himself, Shelley found the ruffian had disappeared.

Raving with the insult, he immediately sought his friend, Mr. Tighe, the son of the renowned Psyche Tighe, who lost no time in taking measures to obtain satisfaction. Mr. Tighe was some time in discovering where the cowardly aggressor had put up; but at length tracked him to the Trè Donzelle. There were but few travellers then in the city, and the description of the man tallied exactly with that of an officer in

the Portuguese service, whose name I have now forgotten. He had, however, started without delay for Genoa, whither Mr. Tighe and Shelley followed, but without being able to overtake him, or learn his route from that city.

This anecdote may suggest to the reader the fanaticism which nearly proved fatal to Spinoza, who has been branded everywhere but in Germany as an Atheist and Epicurean, but whom Novates calls a god-intoxicated man, and whose epicureanism is best disproved by his spending only twopence halfpenny a day on his food.

One evening as Spinoza was coming out of the theatre, where he had been relaxing his overtasked mind, he was startled by the fierce expression of a dark face thrust eagerly before his. The glare of blood-thirsty fanaticism arrested him; a knife gleamed in the air, and he had barely time to parry the blow. It fell upon his chest, but fortunately deadened in its force, only tore his coat. The assassin escaped—Spinoza walked home thoughtful.

The author of the *Biography of Philosophy*, one of the most acute and candid works I ever met with, compares Shelley and Spinoza together, and does ample justice to their characters. Speaking of Shelley's ostracism, he says,—
“Like the young and energetic Shelley, who afterwards imitated him, he found himself an outcast in the busy world, with no other guides through its perplexing labyrinths than sincerity and self-dependence. Two or three new friends soon presented themselves, men who warred against their religion, as he had warred against his own; and a bond of sympathy was forged out of the common injustice. Here again we trace a resemblance to Shelley, who, discountenanced by his relations, sought among a few sceptical friends, to supply the affection he was thus deprived of. Like Spinoza, he too had only sisters with whom he had been brought up. No doubt, in both cases, the consciousness of sincerity, and the pride of martyrdom, were great shields in the combat with society. They are

always so, and it is well they are so, or the battle would never be fought; but they never entirely replace the affections. Shut from our family, we may seek a brotherhood of apostacy, but the new and precarious intellectual sympathies are no compensations for the loss of the emotive sympathies, with all the links of association and all the memories of childhood. Spinoza must have felt this, and as Shelley in a rash marriage endeavoured to fill up the void of his yearning heart, so Spinoza must, we think, swayed by the same feeling, have sought the daughter of his friend and master, Vander Ende, as his wife."

This anecdote (to return to it) will show what animosity the malice of Shelley's enemies had roused against him in the hearts of his compatriots; but the time is happily past, when Quarterlies can deal forth damnation, and point out as a mad dog, to be knocked on the head, every one who does not subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles.

During this winter, he translated to me the Prometheus of Æschylus, reading it as fluently as if written in French or Italian; and if there be any merit in my own version of that wonderful drama, it is much due to the recollection of his words, which often flowed on line after line in blank verse, into which very harmonious prose resolves itself naturally. His friends, the Gisbornes, had, two summers before, taught him also Spanish, which I had studied in India from a Spanish Gil Blas, pretended to be the original—Le Sage's the copy; and we luxuriated in what Shelley calls "the golden and starry Autos," or Mysteries,—except the Greek Choruses, perhaps among the most difficult poems to comprehend—and very rare; so much so, that they are scarcely to be obtained in Spain, though found by Shelley accidentally in an old book-stall at Leghorn. It may be well said, that every new language is a new sense; Shelley profited much by his mastery of Calderon. The splendid passage (truly Salvator-Rosesque,) descriptive of the Pass lead-

ing to Petrella, is almost a version from the Auto of El Purgatorio di San Patricio; and Shelley has left some scenes of Cyprian that give the original in all its spirit. But we also read a tragedy of Calderon's, which, though it cannot compete with Shakspeare's Henry the VIII. contains more poetry—the Cisma D'Ingalaterra. Shelley was much struck with the characteristic Fool, who plays a part in it, and deals in fables, but more so with the octave stanzas (a strange metre in a drama, to choose,) spoken by Carlos, Enamorado di Anna Bolena, whom he had met at Paris, during her father's embassy. So much did Shelley admire these stanzas, that he copied them out into one of his letters to Mrs. Gisborne, of the two last of which I append a translation, marking in Italics, the lines corrected by Shelley:—

Hast thou not seen, officious with delight,
Move through the illumined air about the flower,
The Bee, that fears to drink its purple light,
Lest danger lurk within that Rose's bower?

Hast thou not marked the moth's enamoured flight,
About the Taper's flame at evening hour,
Till kindle in that monumental fire
His sunflower wings their own funereal pyre ?

My heart its wishes trembling to unfold,
Thus round the Rose and Taper hovering came,
And Passion's slave, Distrust, in ashes cold,
Smothered awhile, but could not quench the flame,
Till Love, that grows by disappointment bold,
And Opportunity, had conquered Shame,
And like the Bee and Moth, in act to close,
I burnt my wings, and settled on the Rose."

I had also the advantage of reading Dante with him ; he lamented that no adequate translation existed of the *Divina Comedia*, and though he thought highly of Carey's work, with which he said he had for the first time studied the original, praising the fidelity of the version—it by no means satisfied him. What he meant by an adequate translation, was, one in *terza rima* ; for in Shelley's own words, he held it an essential justice to an author, to render him in the same form. I asked him if he had never attempted

this, and looking among his papers, he shewed, and gave me to copy, the following fragment from the *Purgatorio*, which leaves on the mind an inextinguishable regret, that he had not completed—nay, more, that he did not employ himself in rendering other of the finest passages. In no language has inspiration gone beyond this picture of exquisite beauty, which undoubtedly suggested to Tennyson his “*Vision of Fair Women*.”

And earnest to explore within—around
That divine wood, whose thick green living woof
Tempered the young day to the sight, I wound

Up a green slope, beneath the starry roof,
With slow—slow steps—leaving the mountain's steep,
And sought those leafy labyrinths, motion-proof

Against the air, that in that stillness, deep
And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare,
Like a sweet breathing of a child in sleep*.

* * * * *

* Canto 28, *Purgatorio*. —“*Vago di cercar*,” down to “*Soave vento*.”

*Already had I lost myself so far,
Amid that tangled wilderness, that I
Perceived not where I entered—but no fear

Of wandering from my way disturbed, when nigh,
A little stream appeared; the grass that grew
Thick on its banks, impeded suddenly

My going on. Water of purest dew
On earth, would appear turbid and impure,
Compared with this—whose unconcealing hue,

Dark—dark—yet clear, moved under the obscure
Of the close boughs, whose interwoven looms
No ray of moon or sunshine would endure.

My feet were motionless, but mid the glooms
Darted my charmed eyes, contemplating
The mighty multitude of fresh May-blooms

That starred that night; when even as a thing
That suddenly for blank astonishment
Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing,

Appeared a solitary maid—she went
Singing, and gathering flower after flower,
With which her way was painted and besprent.

* Gia m'avean trasportato i lenti passi.

Bright lady ! who if looks had ever power
To bear true witness of the heart within,
Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower

Unto this bank—prithee O ! let me win
This much of thee—O come ! that I may hear
Thy song : like Proserpine, in Enna's glen,

Thou seemest to my fancy,—singing here,
And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden, when
She lost the spring, and Ceres her more dear.

Another of the canons of Shelley, was, that translations are intended for those who do not understand the originals, and that they should be purely English. He was of all translators, to my mind, the best ; and I have often read with delight as a specimen of a perfect version, his *Εἰς ἀλλὰ* of Theocritus, beginning,—

“ When winds that move not the calm surface,” &c.

Lord Byron has left a translation of the Rimini's story from the Inferno, which affords as poor an idea of the passage in Dante, as an

easel copy does of an old fresco of Giotto's. It is a hard, cold, rough, cast-iron impress, dry and bald, and in many parts unfaithfully rendered; and at Shelley's request, and with his assistance, I attempted to give the Ugolino, which is valuable to the admirers of Shelley, on account of his numerous corrections, which almost indeed make it his own.

Now had the loophole of that dungeon, still
Which bears the name of Famine's Tower from me,
And where 'tis fit that many another will

Be doomed to linger in captivity,
Shown through its narrow opening in my cell,
Moon after moon slow waning, when a sleep,

That of the future burst the veil, in dream
Visited me—it was a slumber deep
And evil—for I saw, or I did seem

To see, *that* tyrant Lord his revels keep,
The leader of the cruel hunt to them,
Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs up the steep

Ascent, that from *the Pisan* is the screen
Of *Lucca*; with him Gualandi came,
Sismondi, and Lanfranchi, *bloodhounds lean*,

*Trained to the sport and eager for the game,
Wide ranging in his front ; but soon were seen,
Though by so short a course, with spirits tame,*

The father and *his whelps* to flag at once,
And then the sharp fangs gored their bosoms deep.
Ere morn I roused myself, and heard my sons,

For they were with me, moaning in their sleep,
And begging bread. Ah for those darling ones !
Right cruel art thou, if thou dost not weep,

In thinking of my soul's sad augury ;
And if thou weepest not now, weep never more !
They were already waked, as wont drew nigh

The allotted hour for food, and in that hour
Each drew a presage from his dream. When I
Heard locked beneath me, of that horrible tower

*The outlet, then into their eyes alone
I looked to read myself, without a sign
Or word. I wept not—turned within to stone.*

They wept aloud, and little Anselm mine,
Said,—'twas my youngest, dearest little one,—
“ What ails thee, father ! why look so at thine ? ”

In all that day, and all the following night,
I wept not, nor replied ; but when to shine
Upon the world, not us, came forth the light

Of the new sun, and thwart my prison thrown,
Gleamed thro' its narrow chink—a doleful sight,—
Three faces, each the reflex of my own,

Were imaged by its faint and ghastly ray ;
Then I, of either hand unto the bone,
Gnawed, in my agony ; and thinking they

'Twas done from hunger pangs in their excess,
All of a sudden raise themselves, and say,
“ Father ! our woes so great, were not the less

Would you but eat of us,—’twas *you who clad*
Our bodies in these weeds of wretchedness,
Despoil them.” Not to make their hearts more sad,

I *hushed* myself. That day is at its close,—
Another—still we were all mute. Oh had
The obdurate earth opened to end our woes !

The fourth day dawned, and when the new sun shone,
Outstretched himself before me as it rose,
My Gaddo, saying, “ Help, father ! hast thou none

For thine own child—is there no help from thee?"
He died—there at my feet—and one by one,
I saw them fall, plainly as you see me.

Between the fifth and sixth day, ere 'twas dawn,
I found *myself blind-groping o'er the three*.
Three days I called them after they were gone.

Famine, of grief can get the mastery.

This translation I shewed afterwards to Byron, and remember his saying, that he interpreted the last words, *Piu che dolor potè il diguiunó* to mean (an interpretation in which Shelley by no means agreed with him) that Ugolino actually did feed on his children after their deaths, and which Lord Byron thought was clearly borne out by the nature of the retribution of his tormentor, as well as the offer of the children to make themselves a sacrifice for their father. "The story," observed Shelley, "is horrible enough without such a comment,"—and he added, "that Byron had deeply studied this death of Ugolino, and perhaps but for it, would never have written the Prisoner of Chillon."

And speaking of Dante, among Shelley's acquaintances at Pisa, was a Mr. Taafe, of whom Byron makes mention in his letters, and whom Shelley used to call *ταφος*, as he did Leigh Hunt, Leontius, &c.

Mr. Taafe had the monomania that he could translate the *Divina Comedia*, and we were much amused by his version, which he brought from time to time, of some of the cantos of the *Inferno*, which he had rendered in octosyllabics; one of the strangest metres to adopt for a serious drama, and a metre that did not admit even of fidelity, for though our own language is extremely monosyllabic, to squeeze three hexameter *terzarimas* into short ones, was an utter impossibility and despair. Mr. Taafe told Shelley that a brother of his in the Austrian service was occupied in a similar pursuit, and Shelley remarked that it was hard upon poor Dante, that his spirit, after a lapse of six centuries, could not be allowed to remain at rest, but must be disquieted by two Milesians.

Let not Mr. Taafe take ill these remarks—he was an amiable and clever man, and his commentary on Dante appeared to me excellent,—as well as to Byron, who recommended Murray to publish it.

I found one of the great remedies for my bodily sufferings this winter, in Shelley's reading. No one ever gave such emphasis to poetry. His voice, it is true, was a cracked soprano, but in the variety of its tones, and the intensity of feeling which he displayed in the finest passages, produced an effect almost electric. He had just completed the *Witch of Atlas*, which in lyrical harmony and fancy, must be considered as a masterpiece. It may be called, if you will, an *ignis fatuus* of the imagination, and was objected to by Mrs. Shelley as such,—a censure that hurt Shelley, and called forth his lines to her, in which he compares it with *Peter Bell*, which according to Wordsworth, cost him nineteen years in composing and retouching—Shelley's *Witch of Atlas*, not so many hours. How well does he,

in these exculpatory verses, characterise the difference between her and Ruth, or Lucy, the first "in a light vest of flowing metre," and Peter, "proud as a dandy with his stays hanging on his wiry limbs, a dress,

Like King Lear's looped and windowed raggedness."

Shelley used to chuckle, with his peculiar hysterical cachination, over this Nursery Tale of Wordsworth's, and to repeat the stanza which forms the motto of his own Peter Bell, with tears running down his laughing eyes, as he gave utterance to,—

This is Hell, and in this smother,
All are damnable and damned,
Each one damning, damns the other,
They are damned by one another,
By no other are they damned.

No one was more sensible to the merits of Wordsworth than himself, but he no longer, as proved by his sonnet, looked upon him as his ideal. He was still an enthusiastic admirer

of his early productions, and particularly of his inimitable lines in blank verse to his sister, which satiate with excess of sweetness ; but these, he said, were written in the golden time of his genius, and he held with Byron, as Nursery Rhymes, the Idiot Boy, and many others. The Excursion I never heard him mention ; and he thought that Wordsworth had left no perfect specimen of an Ode,—that he always broke down when he attempted one. Collins he thought a cold, artificial writer ; and of all the Odes in our language, he most preferred Coleridge's on the French Revolution, beginning, " Ye Clouds," which he used to thunder out with marvellous energy, as well as the Ancient Mariner. But to return to the Witch of Atlas. As to the objection of its not having human interest, one might as well make the same to Shakspeare's Queen Mab. But I even deny that such is the case ; like its prototype, he carries the spirit of dream through the chambers of the great—to the perfumed couch of beauty, the paradise of love ; nor this alone,—

But she would write strange dreams upon the brain
Of those who were less beautiful,—

to soldiers, and priests, and kings ; interweaving
in the texture of the poem, his own philosophy,
and drawing many a charming moral from the
witch's pranks among the cities of mortal men,
and sprites and gods. What a subject for Retch
to have illustrated ! a second Midsummer
Night's Dream.

I must speak of other and higher strains.

Spain had given the signal to Italy—Piedmont asserted her freedom—Genoa threw off the yoke—Sardinia and the little state of Massa Carrara, in imitation of the Swiss Cantons, formed itself into a republic—Naples followed in extorting a constitution. These events, in which Shelley took a breathless interest, aroused all those sympathies which had already been displayed in the lines on “The Manchester Massacre,” and “The Masque of Anarchy.” His odes To Liberty, and Naples, have nothing in our language that can compete with them. They have the merit

of being—what few or none of our modern odes (miscalled) are—odes constructed on the models left us by Pindar and Horace, and worthy of the best times of Greece and Rome ; and have only one fault, that, alas ! they were not prophetic,—that his aspirations were unfulfilled, that bloodshed and anarchy have followed in the train of the Spanish revolution, and that that of Naples was soon put down by Austrian bayonets. A vain attempt to snap the chain only renders it more irrefragable. Shelley felt deeply the resubjugation of Naples, and used to inveigh against Moore's lines, beginning,—

Yes, down to the dust with them, slaves as they are !
suggested by a failure which he deemed ignominious ; and Shelley said that they were written in a spirit unworthy of himself and an Irishman, and whether merited or not, were cruel and ungenerous.

In August, 1820, he had also written his Mock Play ; or Comic Drama of *Œdipus*

(Swellfoot), and a copy of which, given me by Shelley, I had in my possession more than twenty years before it was published by Mrs. Shelley. He told me that on the first day of its being exposed for sale in the City, the then Lord Mayor of London, who was a friend of the gentleman who corrected the proof sheets, advised him to withdraw it. There was nothing in it to call for the animadversion of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, nor do I think that a Crown prosecution would have been its fate, for it was perfectly harmless as regards the public, who could not possibly understand it. Œdipus, (George the Fourth,) Iona Taurina, (Queen Caroline,) Laoctovos, (Wellington,) Purganax, (Castlereagh,) Dacrus—from his lachrymatory propensities (Lord Eldon,) form the dramatis personæ. The derivation of John Bull is very witty.

The Minotaur speaks.

I am the old traditional man Bull,
And from my ancestors have been called *Ionian* ;

I am called Ion, which by interpretation
Is John,—in plain Theban, that is to say,
I am John Bull.

The Green Bag is most happily hit off, and the Chorusses are very fine, particularly that of the Gad-fly. It is indeed a satirical drama, quite in the spirit of Aristophanes.

Mrs. Shelley gives the following account of the origin of the idea, which is curious. "We were at the baths of St. Julian, and a friend came to visit us, when a fair was held in the square beneath our windows. Shelley read to us his Ode to Liberty, and was riotously accompanied by the grunting of a quantity of pigs, brought for sale. He compared it to the chorus of frogs in the *Batrachæ*, and it being an hour of merriment, and one ludicrous association suggesting another, he imagined a political drama on the circumstance of the day, the forthcoming trial of Queen Caroline."—She adds, "that like everything he wrote, it breathes that deep sympathy for the sorrows of humanity, and indigna-

tion against its oppressors, which make it worthy of his name."

Shelley's library was a very limited one. He used to say that a good library consisted not of many books, but a few chosen ones; and asking him what he considered such, he said, "I'll give you my list—catalogue it can't be called:—The Greek Plays, Plato, Lord Bacon's Works, Shakspeare, The Old Dramatists, Milton, Göthe and Schiller, Dante, Petrarch and Boccacio, and Machiavelli and Guicciardini,—not forgetting Calderon; and last, yet first, the Bible." I do not mean that this was all his collection. He had read few English works of the day—scarcely a novel except Walter Scott's, for whose genius he had a sovereign respect, and Anastasius, by which he thought Lord Byron profited in his Don Juan; and the Promessi Sposi. He in speaking of Hope and Manzoni, said, "that one good novel was enough for any man to write, and thought both judicious in not risking their fame by a second attempt."

I read with him the greater part of the *Betrothed Lovers*. He admired their being made the hero and heroine ; said it was an original conception, finely worked out, to make them peasants ; that Don Aboddio was a piece of life-like drawing, and did not wonder that an Italian, so different is the spirit of our language from his own, should call Shakspeare a barbarian. He pointed out to me the scene in the *Innominato's* Castle, when he is first attacked with the plague—and looked upon the description of that pestilence at Milan, as far superior to those in De Foe or Thucydides.

One of the plays we read this winter was Schiller's *Maid of Orleans* ; he thought it bold to have treated the Christian religion as a mythology in that drama, and said that a hundred years hence it would be more admired than now. He deemed it still bolder, making Mary Queen of Scots receive the Sacrament on the stage.

Among English plays, he was a great admirer of the *Duchess of Malfy*, and thought the dun-

geon scene, where she takes her executioners for allegorical personages, of Torture and Murder, or some such grim personifications, as equal to anything in Shakspeare.

I have already spoken of Shelley's opinion of some of his contemporaries, it may not be uninteresting to know what he thought of the merits of others of them. He had, as I have said, been in early life a great admirer of Southey, and took him as his metrical model, but he told me that when his taste became more fastidious, he looked upon him in the light of an improvisatore. "What do you mean by that, Shelley?" I asked. "I mean," he replied, "that he has fancy, imagination, taste,—that he is facile and flowing in his versification,—most musical, if you will,—but he is too smooth and level, he seldom or ever rises with his subject; he will stand criticism as far as words go, but no further; he moves, but does not touch the heart. One reads him with delight once, but never takes him up a second time; besides, his subjects possess

no interest that bears upon the times." Of Rogers and Campbell, whom he called the be-petted and spoiled children of fortune, I shall have something to say in another place. Moore's Irish Melodies were great favourites with him, especially "The Irish Peasant to his Mistress," meaning England and Ireland; of Byron's Childe Harold he has recorded, in a letter to Mr. P., his sentiments.—"The spirit in which it is written, is the most wicked and mischievous insanity that ever was given forth. It is a kind of obdurate and self-willed folly, in which he hardens himself;" and adds, "I remonstrated with him in vain on the tone of mind from which such a view of things arises," and concludes with, "He is heartily and deeply discontented with himself; and contemplating in the disturbed mirror of his own thoughts, the nature and duty of man, what can he behold but objects of contempt and despair?" These remarks apply to the tenor of the poem,—its tendency, rather than to the poem itself; that he thought Byron a great

poet, is proved by a sonnet, of which I forget two of the lines, but which Byron never saw.—

If I esteemed thee less, Envy would kill
Pleasure, and leave to Wonder and Despair
The ministration of the thoughts that fill
My soul, which even as a worm may share
A portion of the Unapproachable,
Marks thy creations rise as fast and fair
As perfect worlds at the Creator's will;
But not the blessings of thy happier lot,

* * * * *

Nor thy well-won prosperity and fame,

* * * * *

Move one regret for his unhonoured name,
Who dares these words—the worm beneath the sod
May lift itself in homage of the God.

I have a note of a conversation I had with Shelley, which arose out of some volumes of Keats's and Leigh Hunt's Poems, of which conversation I will here give the substance.—
“There are some people whom all the hellebore in the world cannot cure of their madness. It is singular that England and Italy should have almost simultaneously set about the perversion

of their poetry under the crotchet of a reform. We are certainly indebted to the Lakists for a more simple and natural phraseology ; but the school that has sprung out of it, have spawned a set of words neither Chaucerian nor Spenserian, words such as “glib,” and “flush,” “whiffling,” “perking up,” “swirling,” “lightsome and brightsome,” and hundreds of others, which never have been, or ought to be, English. But the adoption of such a barbarous jargon in translation from the Greek !” and here he turned to a travesty of Homer, whilst tears of laughter ran out of his large, prominent eyes, confirming what Byron says in one of his letters to Moore, that he was facetious about what is serious in the suburb, and read,—

Up ! thou most overwhelming of mankind !
Pelides—there’s a dreadful roar of men
For thy friend’s body, at the ships ;

and,

Off with a plague ! you scandalous multitude !
Convicted knaves ! &c.,

Be quicker—*do*—and help me, evil children !
Down-looking set !

and,

Juno, bedfellow of Jove, &c.

And in a version from another Greek Poet,

first having been

With her sweet limbs *inside* of Hippocrene,
And other sacred waters of the hill.—&c., &c.

Shelley lamented that a man of such talent as Leigh Hunt, and who in prose had so exquisite a taste, should have so distorted his poetry. He added, that “that school hated him worse than Byron.” But had Shelley been, like Keats, subject to the same influences, it is most probable, from here and there a passage in *Rosalind and Helen*,—“A rock of ocean’s own,” &c., written at the period of his intimacy with his admired friend,—that he would have caught the infection from which his continental abode, his love of the Classics, his cultivation of Italian and Spanish, happily saved him. But even

Keats had lived to see the error of his ways—to all but emancipate himself from the trammels of Cockneyism, in the *Pot of Basil*, in the *Eve of St. Agnes*, and still more in *Hyperion*, where scarcely a trace of it is left; and which poems Shelley often spoke of with great admiration. “The Italians,” Shelley continued to say, “have carried this affectation of phraseology still farther than the sect at home. The so-called Classicists, have taken to fishing in the rancid pool of the thirteenth century, and become so prostituted and enslaved to antiquity, as to deem no word admissible in their poems, that has not the sanction of Dante or Petrarch; little regarding the obvious truth, that new images and ideas are continually multiplying, or perceiving that the great objection to the use of the obsolete is, that they render the language entirely different from that of the world and society; in fact, it might belong to some other planet. But that school will pass away.

Of the three rivals, the French have had more

reason for a reformation, (though you know I never read French). The misnamed "golden age" of Louis XIV. corrupted their literature. Poetry was mown with the scythe, and levelled with the roller, till it became as cold and artificial and monotonous as their ornamental gardening—a language of set phrases and forms of speech. They quitted Montaigne for Voltaire, and abandoned words that never ought to have been abandoned; and much praise is due to the Romanticists for their revival. Thus the Classicists have been driven out of the field. They owe this to an acquaintance with our writers, and something to the Germans.

Shelley preferred Petrarch to any Italian poet; he had his works constantly in hand, and would often spout his Ode to Italy—"Italia mia." He was not partial to Tasso or Ariosto, the first he deemed often stilted and full of conceits; and I have seen Mrs. Shelley read him to sleep over the *Jerusalemme Liberata*. Ariosto he thought "delighted in revenge and cruelty."

The life Shelley led at Pisa was one of much isolation, but not so complete as it had been. Prince Mavrocordato was his constant visitor; with him he read the *Paradise Lost*, and as both were great linguists, the task was rendered the easier. Speaking of this, Shelley used to say that "in interpreting a foreign tongue, it was a great mutual advantage to know several; for that hence synonymes, which failed in one, could be found in another; and thus he would often give the exact meaning of a word in Italian, or Spanish, or Latin, or still more frequently in Greek, which he found the best medium as regarded the *Paradise Lost*,—perhaps the most difficult of all poems to explain. Let him who doubts it make the experiment. In return, the prince read with us the *Agamemnon*, though Shelley little approved of his emendations, and would not admit that a modern Greek was a better scholiast than an English scholar. He admitted, that he might know better the names of plants and flowers, but had no advantage over

a foreigner in correcting the faults, or supplying the *hiatuses* in the text; the best proof of which was, that with a solitary exception, Mustoxidi, modern Greece has produced no great philologist." Nor could Shelley's ears, accustomed to our pronunciation, endure Mavrocordato's, which the latter contended was the only right one.

Shelley would as little adopt the Italian mode as to Latin, and used to say, "that if we were wrong, we erred with Erasmus." I remember pointing out to him in Plautus, a play on the words *arca* and *arce*, which latter must have been pronounced *arke*. Shelley told me he never read Latin, and looked on the Romans as pale copyists of the Greeks; not that he was insensible to the beauty of Virgil, but thought his Eclogues poor and artificial compared with the Pastorals of Theocritus. "Greek," said he, "is as superior to Latin, as German is to French; and the Augustan age bears the same relation to that of Lucretius, as Queen Anne's did to the Elizabethan."

But to return to Mavrocordato. There was at that time little prospect of a Greek revolution, though the subject frequently formed part of our conversation. It was a favourite speculation of Shelley's, and with a prophetic spirit he anticipated the emancipation of that oppressed race; and Mavrocordato, warmed by these aspirations for the independence of his country, which indeed filled the hearts of so many of his countrymen, half resolved to believe, almost against reason, that an insurrection in Greece was possible; but had no idea it was so near at hand. Shelley entertained a sincere regard for Prince Mavrocordato, who had very enlarged and enlightened views of the state of Europe. He says of him,—“I know one Greek of the highest qualities, both of courage and conduct, the Prince Mavrocordato, and if the rest be like him, all will go well.” Whether Shelley's opinion of this statesman has been confirmed by his career, it remains for some future Thucydides to decide. The prince was at that time

occupied in compiling a dictionary of modern and ancient Greek. Whether he completed it I know not. From time to time he used to shew us a modern Greek translation of the Iliad, then publishing in monthly numbers in Paris; but Shelley's knowledge of the language as at present spoken, was very superficial. They used also occasionally to play at chess, but as neither Napoleon nor Charles XII. shone at that game, it is less to be wondered that a poet and politician should not be great proficient in such tactics.

Among his other guests, Rosini (the author of that episode to the *Promesse Sposé*, the "*Monaca di Monza*,") made occasionally one; but no intimacy subsisted between them. Sgricci also passed some evenings at his house. He was perhaps the greatest of *improvisatores* that existed, and gave us more than one specimen of his talent. He used to say that "the God when invoked was always propitious." He was on his way to Lucca, there to give a tragedy

on the stage, as he had done at Paris, where his improvisations were taken down in shorthand, and published; but they did not bear strict criticism, though they abound in passages of great beauty. Shelley went to Lucca, to be present at his acting, and came back wonder-struck; of several subjects proposed at random, he selected the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and I remember Shelley's admiring greatly his comparing Orestes to one high column, all that remained for the support of a house. Shelley said that "his appearance on the stage, his manner of acting, the intonations of his voice, varied to suit the characters he impersonated, had a magical effect, and that his Chorusses in the most intricate metres, were worthy of the Greeks." This was, I believe, the last time Sgricci appeared on the boards of a theatre. He soon after obtained a pension from the Grand-duke of Tuscany, and his pension extinguished his genius. There is a proverb, that singing birds must not be too well fed! He died in 1826 or 1827, still young.

Vaccà, whose medical celebrity was the least of his merits, for he was an ardent lover of his country, and enthusiastical for the emancipation of Italy, was also Shelley's particular friend; but his great practice left him little leisure for visits, besides that the state of his health, that shortly after brought him to an untimely grave, made his professional fatigues require a repose, that even conversation in his leisure hours would have disturbed. He died of consumption—a gradual decay.

Two other persons among my oldest and best friends, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, so often mentioned or alluded to in Shelley's Works, and Mrs. Shelley's Notes, and of whom I shall have somewhat to speak hereafter, added in the spring to their circle.

It was under the idea that their enlightened society and sympathy would tend to chase Shelley's melancholy, that I allured them to Pisa.

Shelley had indeed during that winter been subject to a prostration, physical and psychical,

the most cruel to witness, though he was never querulous or out of temper, never by an irritable word hurt the feelings of those about him. I have accounted already for the causes of his dejection and despondency. His imagination was his greatest enemy—that poetical temperament which those who possess it not, cannot comprehend, is no enviable gift. So sensitive was he of external impressions, so magnetic, that I have seen him, after threading the crowd in the Lung' Arno Corsos, throw himself half fainting into a chair, overpowered by the atmosphere of evil passions, as he used to say, in that sensual and unintellectual crowd. In order to shelter himself from this feeling, he would fly to his pen or books. He was indeed ever engaged in composition or reading, scarcely allowing himself time for exercise or air; a book was his companion the first thing in the morning, the last thing at night. He told me he always read himself to sleep. Even when he walked on the *Argine*, his favourite winter walk, he read—sometimes through

the streets, and generally had a book on the table by his side at dinner, if his abstemious meal could be called one. So little impression did that which contributes one of the main delights of ordinary mortals, make on him, that he sometimes asked, "Mary, have I dined?" Wine he never drank; water, which as I have said, is super-excellent at Pisa, being his chief beverage. Not but he was a lover of tea, calling himself sometimes humorously a *Théist*. Let not, however, my readers imagine that he was always dejected or despondent,—at times he was as sportive as his child, (with whom he would play by the hour on the floor,) and his wit flowed in a continuous stream,—not that broad humour which is so much in vogue at the present day, but a genuine wit, classical I might say, and refined, that caused a smile rather than a laugh.

I have alluded to his physical sufferings—they, if they did not produce, tended to aggravate his mental ones. He was a martyr to the most painful complaint, Nephritis, for which he had,

though with no alleviation, consulted the most eminent medical men, at home and abroad, and now was trying Scott's vitriolic acid baths, much in vogue. This malady constantly menaced to end fatally. During its paroxysms he would roll on the floor in agony. I had seen animal magnetism practised in India—had myself benefited by it at Geneva, and at his earnest request, consented to try its efficacy on him during his next attack. One of them affected him during an evening, when two ladies, one of whom was Mrs. Shelley, were present. The imposition of my hand on his forehead, instantly put a stop to his spasms, and threw him into a deep slumber, which for want of a better name has been called somnambulism. He slept with his eyes open. During the continuance of it, I led him from one part of the room to the sofa in the other end; and when the trance was overpast, after the manner of all somnambulists, he would not admit that he had slept, or that he had made any replies, which I elicited from him by questioning;

those replies being pitched in the same tone of voice as my own. He also during a second experiment improvised some Italian verses, which were faultless, although he had at that time never written one. Shelley had never previously heard of Mesmerism, and I shewed him a treatise I composed, embodying most of the facts recorded by its adepts, and he was particularly struck by a passage in Tacitus, no credulous historian, who seriously related two cases (witnessed he says by many living) in Egypt, that might stagger the most sceptical. "Does it lead to materialism or immaterialism?" Shelley thought to the latter—"that a separation from the mind and body took place—the one being most active and the other an inert mass of matter. He deduced from this phenomenon an additional argument for the immortality of the soul, of which no man was more fully persuaded.

After my departure from Pisa, he was magnetised by a lady, which gave rise to the beautiful stanzas entitled "The Magnetic Lady to

her Patient," and during which operation, he made the same reply to an inquiry as to his disease, and its cure, as he had done to me,—“What would cure me would kill me,”—meaning lithotomy. Mrs. Shelley also magnetised him, but soon discontinued the practice, from finding that he got up in his sleep, and went one night to the window, (fortunately barred,) having taken to his old habit of sleep-walking, which I mentioned, in his boyhood, and also in London.

Shelley showed me a treatise he had written, of some length, on the Life of Christ, and which Mrs. Shelley should give to the world. In this work he differs little from Paulus, Strauss, and the Rationalists of Germany. The first of these has been for fifty years professor of divinity in the university of Heidelberg, and is venerated with honours due to his talents and exemplary virtues; the latter once filled the theological chair at Zurich, from which he was ousted by the Jesuits.

The new sect which has lately sprung up, with Ronge at its head, whose doctrines were running like wildfire through the Confederation, but are now at the ebb-tide,—this New Catholicism which it was once proposed by the Baden Chamber to make one of the religions of the state, proves the wide dissemination which Rationalism has had, and the revolution in men's minds in Germany. Rongeism is only a more extended form of Unitarianism.

But the Rongeists go far beyond the Unitarians or Rationalists, and have so refined away the tenets of our religion, discarding prophecy, miracles, the divinity of our Saviour, and the atonement, that they can scarcely be denominated Christians.

Shelley, in this treatise, does no more than Strauss, Paulus, and Ronge; he indeed treats the subject with more respect than either, and although he may reduce Christianity to a code of morals, how does he differ in so doing from the

Unitarians, though I am aware that this by some casuistry they do not admit?

But without entering on this discussion, which might lead me too far out of the track, I can say, with reference to Shelley, that whatever his early opinions might have been, he on becoming a Platonist, firmly believed in a future state. He used to say, that "no man who reflected could be a Materialist long;" and in his Essay on Poetry, (though he seems in Mrs. Shelley's transcript of the MS. to have made a considerable alteration in the passage afterwards from that originally written, which he shewed to me,) the words ran thus, verbatim: "The persons in whom this power (poetry) abides, may often, as regards many parts of their nature, be Atheists; but though they may deny and abjure, they are compelled to serve, which is seated in the throne of their own soul;" and in his Essay on a Future State, unfortunately a fragment, he says, "The destiny of man can hardly be so degraded

that he was born to die." His poems abound with the noblest conceptions of a Deity and of Heaven, witness his ode, so entitled, where, after

Glorious shapes have life in thee,
Heaven, and all Heaven's company,

he in the next stanza adds,—

Thou art the abode
Of that Power, which is the glass
Where man his image sees.
Generations as they pass,
Worship thee on bended knees ;
Their unreturning gods and they
Like a river pass away ;
Thou remainest such alway.

And in the Adonais,—

The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

Let these passages suffice, though I might
multiply them *ad infinitum*.

Return we to life and its realities.

Shelley used to say, that every city or town had its Devil or its Diavolessa—we have no word in our language for the fiend feminine. Monk Lewis has shewn us, even when they come in the shape of the Madonna, how much they are to be dreaded, even by an Ambrosio. Byron thought the viaggiatory English old maids, who scour the continent, and fix themselves for the time being in all parts of it, were only incarnations of evil spirits. I am not so *ungallant*. But of the male devils, Goldoni has given us a specimen in his “Bottega di Caffè,” and Poole in his Paul Pry—two devils who have much in common, and bear a strong family likeness. Their name is Legion, though they differ from each other as much as Asmodeus does from Mephistophiles. The term *seccatura*, or drying up of all our faculties, mental and bodily, seems to offer an abstract idea of the effects they produce. This preamble brings me to the Devil of Pisa. P——— was about fifty years of age, somewhat above the common height, with a

figure boney and angular, and covered with no more superfluous flesh than a prize-fighter. His face was dark as that of a Moor, his features marked and regular, his eyes black and gloomy. He always reminded me of one of Titian's portraits (his family had been Venetians,) stepping out of its frame. Had he lived when Venice was governed by the Tré, he would have made a Loredano, and might have sate to Anne Ratcliffe for a Schedoni; but to descend to modern times, during the reign of Austrian despotism he was admirably calculated for a spy, or *calderaio*,—perhaps he might be one. “*Chi lo sa.*” Nature certainly never designed him for a divine. As to his religion, it was about on a par with that of Il Abbate Casti, (*Casti a non casto*, as *lucus a non lucendo*,) of whom he was afterwards a worthy successor, in his native city, Florence. But at Pisa, *Il Signore Professore* was the title by which he was generally known; a professor, like many other professors and lecturers, at least in Italy, who had made a

sinecure of his office, that of *Belles Lettres*, and only mounted the *Cathedra* once, during the many years that he touched his poor emoluments; for the Transalpine universities are not quite so richly endowed as our own. Not that this neglect of his duties would have affected his appointment, but as he told me, he lost it by an irresistible *bon mot*. During one of his midnight orgies, which he was in the habit of celebrating with some of the most dissolute of the students, he was interrogated in the darkness, by the patrol in the streets of Pisa, as to who and what he was; to which questioning he gave the following reply: "Son' un uomo publico, in una strada publica, con una donna publica." This public avowal cost him his chair. But it gave him *eclat*, and did not lose him his friends, or exclude him from the houses where he was the spiritual guide and confessor. There were, it is true, two reasons why he was tolerated in good society, (which Casti says is to be found where he places Don Juan, below,)—his pen and his

tongue—the dread of both. His epigrams were *sanglantes*, and he gave *soubriquets* the most happy for those who offended him; as an instance of which, he most happily styled a captain of our navy, *il dolce capitano*; a bye-word that stuck to him through life, and always excited a smile at his expense whenever he appeared. He was a good poet, if one might judge from the quotations he was in the habit of making from his tragedies, which he continually talked about, and which Madame de Staël, who knew him, used to call his *imaginary* ones, for not a line of them was ever published—perhaps written. His talent was conversation—a conversation full of repartee, and sparkling with wit; and his information (he was a man of profound erudition, vast memory, and first-rate talent,) made him almost oracular. Shelley, when P—— first became an *habitué* at his house, was charmed with him, and listened with rapt attention to his eloquence, which he compared to that of Coleridge. It was a swarm of ideas singularly ex-

travagant, but which he contrived to weave into his argument with marvellous embroidery. Now he plunged into abysses but to lighten other abysses; and his words, like a torrent—for there was no stopping him when fairly rushing onwards.—carried all before them.

It was this gift of eloquence that made him for a time welcome at Shelley's, where he passed many an evening in the week—(I think I see him now, dissecting the snipes with his long, boney, snuffy fingers—for he never in the operation made use of a knife or fork); at first I say, —for he had in the outset sufficient tact (no one knew mankind better) to keep in the background the revolting vices which were familiar to him and disfigured his character. He had a predilection for our *compatriotes*, with and without the *e*, but particularly patronized the *Belle Inglese*, as he always called English women; and after the Italian fashion, soon familiarly called Mrs. Shelley, *La Signora Maria*. Wherever he once got the *entrée*, he was a *sine qua non*,

a "*fa tout*." He had always some poor devil of low origin, to recommend as a master of his language, receiving under the rose, part of the lesson money. He was never at a loss to find some *Palazzo* to be let, getting a monthly *douceur* out of the rent, from the landlord; for a picture fancier, he had always at hand some mysterious *Marchese*, or *Marchesa*, ready to part with a Carlo Dolce or Andrea del Sarto, or Allori—*originals* of course. He could dilate for hours on the Venus of the Tribune, the Day and Night of Michael Angelo, the Niobe—knew the history of every painter and painting in the galleries of the Uffizii and Pitti, better than Vasari, or his successor Rosini; in short he was a *Mezzano*, *Cicerone*, *Conoscitore*, *Dilletante*, and, I might add, *Ruffiano*.

I have perhaps at too great length botched a sketch of the ex Professor, but as the world is indebted to him for the *Epipsychidion*, I think myself in gratitude bound not to pass him over without a record, and if I had Mrs. Shelley's

Valperga, I could have spared my readers my own "*studio studiato*," for he is there drawn to the life.

P—— was *amico di casa* and confessor to a noble family, one of the most distinguished for its antiquity of any at Pisa, where its head then filled a post of great authority. By his first countess he had two grown-up daughters, and in his old age had the boldness, the audacity I might say, to take unto himself a wife not much older than either. This lady, whose beauty did not rival that of the Count's children, was naturally jealous of their charms, and deemed them dangerous rivals in the eyes of her Cavaliere; and exerting all her influence over her infatuated husband, persuaded him, though their education was completed, to immure them in two convents (pensions, I should say, or as they are called, *conservatorios*) in his native city. The Professor, who had known them from infancy, and been their instructor in languages and polite literature, made the *Contessinas* frequent subjects of

conversation. He told us that the father was not over rich, owing to his young wife's extravagance; that he was avaricious withal, and did not like to disburse their dowries, which, as fixed by law, must be in proportion to the father's fortune, and was waiting till some one would take them off his hands without a *dote*. He spoke most enthusiastically of the beauty and accomplishments of Emilia, the eldest, adding, that she had been confined for two years in the convent of St. A——. "Poverina," he said, with a deep sigh, "she pines like a bird in a cage—ardently longs to escape from her prison-house,—pines with *ennui*, and wanders about the corridors like an unquiet spirit; she sees her young days glide on without an aim or purpose. She was made for love. Yesterday she was watering some flowers in her cell—she has nothing else to love but her flowers—'Yes,' said she, addressing them, 'you are born to vegetate, but we thinking beings were made for action—not to be penned up in a corner, or set at a window to blow and

die.' A miserable place is that convent of St. A——," he added, "and if you had seen, as I have done, the poor pensionnaires shut up in that narrow, suffocating street, in the summer, (for it does not possess a garden,) and in the winter as now, shivering with cold, being allowed nothing to warm them but a few ashes, which they carry about in an earthen vase,—you would pity them."

This little story deeply interested Shelley, and P—— proposed that the poet and myself should pay the captive a visit in the *parloir*.

The next day, accompanied by the priest, we came in sight of the gloomy, dark convent, whose ruinous and dilapidated condition told too plainly of confiscation and poverty. It was situate in an unfrequented street in the suburbs, not far from the walls. After passing through a gloomy portal, that led to a quadrangle, the area of which was crowded with crosses, memorials of old monastic times, we were soon in the presence of Emilia. The fair recluse reminded me (and

with her came the remembrance of Mephisto) of Margaret.

Time seemed to her
To crawl with shackled feet, and at her window
She stands, and watches the heavy clouds on clouds,
Passing in multitudes o'er the old town-walls.
And all the day, and half the night she sings,
"Oh, would I were a little bird!" At times
She's cheerful,—but the fit endures not long,
For she is mostly sad,—then she'll shed tears,—
And after she has wept her sorrows out,
She is as quiet as a child.

Emilia was indeed lovely and interesting. Her profuse black hair, tied in the most simple knot, after the manner of a Greek Muse in the Florence gallery, displayed to its full height, her brow, fair as that of the marble of which I speak. She was also of about the same height as the antique. Her features possessed a rare faultlessness, and almost German contour, the nose and forehead making a straight line,—a style of face so rare, that I remember Bartolini's telling Byron that he had scarcely an instance of such

Grecian

in the numerous casts of busts which his studio contained. Her eyes had the sleepy voluptuousness, if not the colour of Beatrice Cenci. They had indeed no definite colour, changing with the changing feeling, to dark or light, as the soul animated them. Her cheek was pale, too, as marble, owing to her confinement and want of air, or perhaps "to thought." There was a lark in the *parloir*, that had lately been caught. "Poor prisoner," said she, looking at it compassionately, "you will die of grief! How I pity thee! What must thou suffer, when thou hearest in the clouds, the songs of thy parent birds, or some flocks of thy kind on the wing, in search of other skies—of new fields—of new delights! But like me, thou wilt be forced to remain here always—to wear out thy miserable existence here. Why can I not release thee?"

Might not Shelley have taken from this pathetic lamentation, his—

Poor captive bird! who from thy narrow cage,
Pourest such music as might well assuage

The rugged hearts of those who prisoned thee,
Were they not deaf to thy sweet melody?

and the sequel,—

High spirit-winged heart! who dost for ever
Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain endeavour,
* * Till thy panting, wounded breast,
Stains with dear blood its unmaternal nest.

Such was the impression of the only visit I paid Emilia; but I saw her some weeks after, at the end of a Carnival, when she had obtained leave to visit Mrs. Shelley, companioned by the abbess. In spite of the contessina's efforts to assume cheerfulness, one might see she was very, very sad; but she made no complaint; she had grown use to suffering. It had become her element.

Mrs. Shelley and Shelley frequently went to the convent, to endeavour by their sympathy to console the unhappy girl. Nor were they her only sympathizers: Lady Charlotte Bury's daughters visited her also. Her condition was

much aggravated by there being no one within the convent whom she could make a companion or confidante, for her fellow-prisoners were of a low class, and such as a nobleman's daughter could not associate with. Shelley felt deeply the fate of poor Emilia, frequently wrote to her, and received from her in reply, bouquets of flowers, in return for one of which he sent her the following exquisite Madrigal.

Madonna! wherefore hast thou sent to me,
Sweet basil, and mignonette,
Embleming Love and Health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be?
Alas! and are they wet!
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
For never rain or dew
Such fragrance drew
From plant or flower—the very doubt endears
My sadness ever new—
The sighs I breathe—the tears I shed for you.

In his correspondence, he says, “But Emilia is not merely beautiful, she has cultivated her mind beyond what I have ever met with in

Italian women." She was well-read in the poets of her land, was made for love, had the purest and most sublime conceptions of the master-passion, and without having read the Symposium of Plato, wrote the following Apostrophe to Love, which I have attempted to put into our runic tongue, but which is but a pale reflex of the original.

IL VERO AMORE.

Amore, alma del mondo, amore sorgente di ogni buono, di ogni bello, che sarebbe l'Universo se ad esso mancasse la tua face creatrice? Un orribile deserto! allora, lungi da esso, anco la sola ombra è del buono e del bello, e d'ogni felicità. Di quell' amore Io, parlo che impossessandose di tutto il nostro cuore, dell' intiera volonta nostra, ci sublima, e c'inalza al di sopra di ogni altro individuo dell' istessa nostra specie, e tutto energetico, tutto immenso, tutto puro, tutto divino, non ci ispira se non, se azioni magnanime, e digne de sequaci di questo soave e onnipotente nume. L'Amante no, non e confuso con gli uomini, non trascina l'anima sua, ma la inalza, la spinge, e la corona di luce, all' sorriso della Divinita.

Esso doventa un essere sorprendente, e talvolta incomprendibile. L'Universo, il vasto Universo, non

piu capace a racchiudere le sue idie, i suoi affetti, svan-
 isce a suoi occhi. L'anima amante sdegna essere ris-
 tretto, niente puo ret²inerla. Essa si slancia fuori del
 creato, e si crea nell' infinito, un mondo, tutto per essa,
 diverso assai di questo oscuro e pauroso Baratro, as-
 sorta di continuo in un estase dolcissima, e veramente
 beata. Tutto ciò che non ha rapporta all' oggetto di
 sua tenerezza, tutto ciò che non e quell' oggetto adorato,
 comparisce un piccolo punto a suoi occhi. Ma dove è
 colui, suscettivole di tale amore? Dove? chi possa
 ispirarlo. Oh amore! Io non sono che amore. Io
 non posso esistere senza amare. La mia anima, il
 mio corpo, tutti i miei pensieri ed affetti, tutto ciò che
 Io sono, si trasforma in un solo sentimento di amore—
 e questo sentimento durera in eterno. Senza amare,
 la vita mi divrebbe insupportabile, il mondo un inospito
 spaventoso e desolato deserto, sparso soltanto di spet-
 tri, sì terribili alla mia vista che per fuggarli, io mi
 getterei nella misteriosa ma tranquilla magione di
 morte. Ah sì, io preferesco le dolce pene dell amore,
 i continui palpiti che lo accompagnano, il timore di
 esso inse³perabile, ad una, per me stupida calma, ed a
 tutti i piaceri che posson recare tutti⁴ le altre passioni
 sodisfatte, tutti i bene (sì senza amore puo essere alcun
 bene,) che il mondo apprezza e de quali è avido.

Ma quanto tu sei profanato, O Amore! quali
 oltraggi fanno i figli della terra al tuo nome divino.
 Sovente agli affetti i pui illeciti, alle azzioni le piu vitu-

3
 inseparabile

4 e

5 seni

perose, al delitto (oh! attentato esecrando) all' istesso delitto s^e da il nome di amore, si osa dire che egli lo ha cagionato. Ahi impi! sacrileghi! inaudita bestemmia! voi non che risenterlo, non comprendete neppure ciò che la parola amore significhi. Amore vuol di virtù, amore ispira virtù, ed è la sorgente delle azioni le piu magnanime, della vera felicità. Amore é un fuoco, che bruciando non distrugge, una mista di piacere e di pena, una pena che porta piacere un' Essenza eterna, spirituale, infinita, pura, celestiale. Questo si è il vero, il solo amore, quell' sentimento che soltanto puo reimpire intieramente il vuoto dell' anima, quell' vuoto orribile peggior della morte. Ogni altro sentimento da questo dissimile, *Da* questo' men puro, non merita il sacro nome di amore, e gli emp²i che lo profano², e lo denigrano, saranno punite³ da questo potentissimo nume, et meriteranno l'eterna perditione. Ove l'anima che è sensibile, che cerca amore, si trova una volta nell' aby⁴ss⁴o della desolazione, e ove il cuore sia deserto di questo dolce fuoco, o trovi infidele l'oggetto di sua tenerezza, questo anima miserabile cerchi, (almeno io gli il consiglio) cerchi almeno, il suo refugio nella tomba, e si pascoli di esso⁵, come dell' ultima consolazione!

THE TRUE LOVE.

Love! soul of the world! Love, the source of all that is good, of all that is lovely! what would the

universe be, failing thy creative flame? A horrible desert. But far from this, it is the sole shadow of all goodness, of all loveliness, and of all felicity. Of that love I speak, that possessing itself of all our soul, of our entire will, sublimates and raises one, above every other individual of the same species; and all energetic, all pure, all divine, inspires none but actions that are magnanimous, and worthy of the followers of that sweet and omnipotent deity. The lover! no! he is not confounded with the herd of men, he does not degrade his soul, but elevates, drives on, and crowns it with light at the smile of the divinity. He becomes a supereminent being, and as such altogether incomprehensible. The universe—the vast universe, no longer capable of bounding his ideas, his affections, vanishes from before his sight. The soul of him who loves disdains restraint—nothing can restrain it. It lances itself out of the created, and creates in the infinite a world for itself, and for itself alone, how different from this obscure and fearful den!—is in the continued enjoyment of the sweetest extacy, is truly happy. All that has no relation to the object of its tenderness—all that is not that adored object, appears an insignificant point to his eyes. But where is he, susceptible of such love? Where? Who is capable of inspiring it? Oh love! I am all love. I cannot exist without love! My soul—my mortal frame—all my thoughts and affections, all that which I am, transfigures itself into

one sole sentiment of love, and that sentiment will last eternally. Without Love, life would become to me insupportable—the world an inhospitable and desolate desert, only haunted by spectres, so terrible to my sight, that to fly from them, I could cast myself into the mysterious but tranquil abode of death. Ah! yes! I prefer the sweet pains of love, the continual throbbings that accompany, the fear inseparable from it, to a to me stupid calm, and to all the pleasures that can supply the gratification of all other passions, all the goods (if without love there can be any good) which the world prizes and covets.

But how art thou profaned, O Love! what outrages do not the children of the earth commit in thy name divine! Often and often to affections the most illicit, to actions the most vile and degrading, to crime—ah! execrable iniquity! when even to crime itself they give the name of Love, and dare to tax it with the commission of crime! Alas! unheard-of blasphemy. Impious and sacrilegious that ye are, you not only feel it not, but comprehend not even what the word Love signifies. Love has no wish but for virtue—Love inspires virtue—Love is the source of actions the most magnanimous, of true felicity—Love is a fire that burns and destroys not, a mixture of pleasure and of pain, a pain that brings pleasure, an essence eternal, spiritual, infinite, pure, celestial. This is the true, the only Love,—that sentiment which can alone entirely

fill up the void of the soul—that horrible void, worse than death. Every other sentiment dissimilar from this, than this less pure, deserves not the sacred name of Love ; and they who impiously profane and defile it, shall be punished by that most mighty of Divinities, and shall merit eternal perdition. Where the soul that is feelingly alive seeks for love, and finds itself in the abyss of desolation, and where the heart is divested of this sweet fire, or finds faithless the object of its tenderness,—that miserable soul, let it seek (at least I so counsel it), let it seek, I say, its refuge in the tomb, and feed upon it as its last consolation.

This admirable piece of eloquence was perhaps the source of the inspiration of the *Epipsychidion*, a poem that combines the pathos of the “*Vita Nuova*” of Dante with the enthusiastic tenderness of Petrarch. The *Epipsychidion* is the apotheosis of love—Emilia a mere creature of his imagination, in whom he idealised Love in all its intensity of passion. His feeling towards the *Psyche* herself, was, as may be seen by Letter LX. of his correspondence, a purely Platonic one. He calls the *Epipsychidion* a mystery, and says,

“as to real flesh and blood, you know that I do not deal in those articles. Expect nothing human or earthly from me.” &c. His love for Emilia, if such it can in the general acceptation of the term be called, was of the kind described in the Symposium by Socrates, who defines it “as a desire of generation in the Beautiful.” What is it but a comment on the words of Socrates—“When any one ascending from a correct system of love, begins to contemplate this supreme beauty, he already touches the consummation of his labour. For such as discipline themselves on this system, or are conducted by another beginning to ascend through those transitory objects that are beautiful, towards that which is Beauty itself, proceeding as on steps, from the love of that form to two, and from that of two to all those forms that are beautiful, and from beautiful forms to beautiful habits and institutions, and from institutions to beautiful doctrines, until from the meditation of many doctrines, they arrive at that which is nothing else than the doctrine of the Supreme Beauty itself

and in the contemplation of which at length they repose—no longer unworthily and meanly enslaving themselves to the attractions of one form in love, nor one subject of discipline and science,” &c. We thus better may comprehend a passage, which taken literally may lead to false constructions.

Love is like understanding, that grows bright
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,
Imagination, that from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human phantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills
The universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error, the worm, with many a sunlike arrow
Of its reverberated lightnings. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates
One object, and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.

And he goes on to say,—

Mind from its object differs most in this :
Evil from good—misery from happiness—
The baser from the nobler ; the impure
And frail from what is clear and must endure.

In this doctrine he also developes his favourite doctrine of an antenatal life, of which I have already spoken at some length.

O too late
 Beloved ! O too soon adored by thee,
 For in the fields of Immortality
 My spirit should at first have worshipped thine,
 A divine presence in a place divine ;
 Or should have moved beside it on this earth,
 A shadow of that substance from its birth.

Coleridge was, as I have said, his precursor in such ideas, and a teacher of the *Εν και παν*, the one and all—the all in one.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting,—
 The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar ;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But amid clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home.

In accordance with these ideas, Shelley thought that to pass from one state of existence

to another, was not death, but a new development of life; that we must love as we live, through all eternity; and that they who have not this persuasion, know nothing of life, nothing of love; that they who do not make the universe a fountain whence they may literally draw new life and love, know nothing of one or the other, and are not fated to know anything of it. The words are not his, but they shadow out what I heard him better express.

This poem, or rhapsody, incomprehensible to the general class of readers, from a defect in the common organ of perception, for the ideas of which it treats, fell dead from the press. I believe that not a copy of it was sold, not a single review noticed it—One of the many proofs that the public ear is deaf to the finest accords of the lyre.

But Emilia's term of bondage was about to expire; she was affianced to a man whom she had never seen, and who was incapable of appreciating her talents or her virtues. She was about to be

removed from the scenes of her youth, the place of her birth, her father on whom she doted, and to be buried in the Mahremma. The day of her wedding was fixed, but a short respite took place for a reason mentioned in a letter of Shelley to Mrs. Shelley (from Ravenna), where he says, "Have you heard anything of my poor Emilia? from whom I got a letter the day of my departure, saying that her marriage was deferred on account of the illness of her *sposo*!" and in another letter he expresses, what in the fragment of Ginevra, too well typified the fate of that unfortunate lady, the poor sacrificed Emilia,—his fears as to what she was destined to suffer. The sacrifice was at length completed, and she was soon as much forgotten as if she had never existed—though not by Shelley.

I am enabled to detail the consequences of this ill-starred union, to finish her biography. Some years after, P——, who had several times during his feverish existence, been reduced to abject poverty and distress, by his reckless

extravagance, his rage for travelling, though his journies never extended beyond Leghorn on the one hand, and Florence on the other, and where he used to indulge in all manner of excesses, and which brought about the same result, the sequestration of his ecclesiastical preferment, and imprisonment by his creditors till his debts were liquidated—made his appearance at the capital of Tuscany, where I then was. He found at Florence a wider field for his operations, and shewed himself a not less active and busy-bodied *Diavolo incarnato*. He did not forget our old acquaintanceship at Shelley's, and haunted me like an unquiet spirit. One day, when at my house, he said mysteriously,—“I will introduce you to an old friend—come with me.” The coachman was ordered to drive to a part of the city with which I was a stranger, and drew up at a country house in the suburbs. The villa, which had once boasted considerable pretensions, was in great disrepair. The court leading to it, overgrown with weeds, proved that it had been

for some years untenanted. An old woman led us through a number of long passages and rooms, many of the windows in which were broken, and let in the cold blasts from "the wind-swept Apennine;" and opening at length a door, ushered us into a chamber, where a small bed and a couple of chairs formed the whole furniture. The couch was covered with white gauze curtains, to exclude the gnats; behind them was lying a female form. She immediately recognised me—was probably prepared for my visit—and extended her thin hand to me in greeting. So changed that recumbent figure, that I could scarcely recognise a trace of the once beautiful Emilia. Shelley's evil augury had been fulfilled, she had found in her marriage all that he had predicted; for six years she led a life of purgatory, and had at length broken the chain, with the consent of her father; who had lent her this long disused and dilapidated *Campagne*. I might fill many a page by speaking of the tears she shed over the memory of

Shelley,—but enough—she did not long enjoy her freedom. Shortly after this interview, she was confined to her bed; the seeds of *malaria*, which had been sown in the Mahremma, combined with that all-irremidable malady, broken-heartedness, brought on a rapid consumption.

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn.

The old woman, who had been her nurse, made me a long narration of her last moments, as she wept bitterly. I wept too, when I thought of Shelley's *Psyche*, and his *Epipsychidion*.

But back to Pisa. Some little time before quitting it, we had several conversations respecting Keats, and the *Endymion*; the attack on which poem in the *Quarterly* had been, though differing in degree, of a most unworthy character. Shelley felt for Keats much more than he had done for himself, under a similar infliction, and wrote a letter, a copy of which Mrs. Shelley found among Shelley's papers, and to which she appends the remark, that "it was never sent."

There she was right, but with some trifling alterations he did address a letter to the same purport,—almost indeed a transcript of the other,—to Mr. Southey, appealing to him, as an influential person in the conduct of the Review, against the verdict of that tribunal; and this very letter, though Mrs. Shelley was perfectly ignorant of both circumstances, *did* obtain an answer; and which answer, instead of being a justification of the writer of the article, contained a most unjustifiable attack on Shelley himself; alluding to some opinions of his expressed at Keswick, so many years before, from which he hinted that the unhappy catastrophe that befel Shelley's first wife might have arisen. Shelley shewed me this answer, a more thoroughly unfeeling one never was it my fate to peruse. Indifferent as Shelley had been to the slanderous paper, which had emanated from the pages of the Quarterly, as coming from an anonymous libeller, this letter, signed by Southey, tore open anew the wounds of his heart, and affected him

for some time most keenly. And to it, Byron alludes in the *Conversations*, with just and severe reprobation, saying,—“Shame on the man who could revive the memory of a misfortune of which Shelley was altogether innocent, and ground scandal upon falsehood! What! have the audacity to confess, that he had for ten years treasured up some observations of Shelley’s, made at his own table!” Who the author of the second of these critiques might have been, of course can never be known to a certainty. Byron attributed it (see *Don Juan*, or rather, would you could see, reader, as I have seen, the expunged lines in the stanza, about “a priest almost a priest;”) to a divine, and poet; and Shelley was fully persuaded the articles on himself and Keats, were both by the same hand. If the parentage was rightly affixed, I do not envy the author. “Miserable man!” says Shelley, in his *Preface to Adonais*, “you, one of the meanest, have defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God! nor shall it be your ex-

cuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers but used none." To prove that he thought this man and his own base and unprincipled calumniator, one and the same, may appear from—

Live thou ! whose infamy is not thy shame !
Live ! *fear no heavier chastisement from me !*
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill thy venom, when its fangs o'erflow.
Remorse, and self-contempt, shall cling to thee.
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow—
And like a beaten hound, tremble thou shalt as now.

The critique was so far an unjust one, on the *Endymion*, that, with its faults, it was evident that that work was the production of a true poet, one at least who had in him all the elements of poetry,—chaotic, indeed, but capable of being reduced to a world of beauty ; and if the article had been written in that kind and parental spirit that becomes an old reviewer to a young writer,—if his object had been to remove the film from those eyes that flattery had blinded,

to lead him to form his style on better models, to draw from purer sources,—less blame would have attached to the critique. Shelley confesses that “*Endymion* is a poem considerably defective, and that perhaps it deserved as much censure as the pages of the review record against it; but not to mention that, there is a certain contemptuousness of phraseology for which it is difficult for a critic to abstain in the review of *Endymion*; he does not think that the writer has given it due praise;” and in his letter above referred to, I remember his instancing the Hymn to Pan as “a proof of the promise of ultimate excellence.” Shelley also adds, that there was no danger of the *Endymion* becoming a model of that false taste with which he owns it is replenished, confessing that “the canons of taste to which Keats had conformed in this composition, were the very reverse of his own.”

Shelley, together with Byron, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Mr. Brown, and others, seems to have been mispersuaded, that the article in the Quar-

terly produced the effect of either embittering the existence of Keats, or of inducing consumption. That insidious disease was hereditary in his family, and did not show itself for eighteen months after the appearance of that number of the Quarterly. Mr. Finch says that "he nursed a deeply-rooted disgust to life and the world, owing to his having been infamously treated by the very persons whom his generosity had rescued from want and woe." Whether this was the case, I know not, and it would be needless and uninteresting to the public, to drag forth his private wrongs, whatever they might be; but for a time, at least,—however ultimately his property might have been restored to him,—he was almost left destitute, and before leaving England, had not a hundred pounds he could call his own. His highly sensitive and proud spirit, that brooked not dependence, and the prospect of the future, preyed on him like eating fire.

The blow was a death-blow. It is the last drop in the cup that fills the measure, and makes

it overflow—the last grain of sand that marks the hour,—and from that moment his were counted. But the review in question was a mere unit, and not the last in the glass.

I am fortunately enabled, from a most authentic source, to set this matter at rest—by the kind communication of a lady who knew him well, better indeed than any other individual of his own family. To confirm the else solitary opinion of Mr. Dilke, she says,—

“I did not know Keats at the time the review appeared. It was published, if I remember rightly, in June 1818. However great his mortification might have been, he was not, I should say, of a character likely to have displayed it in the manner mentioned in Mrs. Shelley’s Remains of her husband. Keats, soon after the appearance of the review in question, started on a walking expedition into the Highlands. From thence he was forced to return, in consequence of the illness of a brother, whose death a few months afterwards affected him strongly.”

In a folio edition of Shakspeare, which I have spoken of, belonging to Keats,—in King Lear, the words, “*Poor Tom*” (his brother’s baptismal name) are underlined. How will a word sometimes call up a world of sad thoughts and poignant regrets ! that familiar “*Poor Tom*” revived in Keats the memory of his brother. The passage has also a note of admiration in the margin, and I think I can trace the marks of a tear.

The following extract of a poem, not published in his works, proves an intensity of feeling even to the dread of madness. It was written while on his journey, soon after his pilgrimage to the birth-place of Burns,—not for the gaze of the world, but as a record of the temper of his mind at the time. It is a sure index to the more serious traits in his character ; but Keats, neither in writing nor speaking, could *affect* a sentiment ; his gentle spirit knew not how to counterfeit.

There is a charm in footing slow

Across a silent plain,

Where patriot battle has been fought,

Where glory had the gain ;

There is a pleasure on the heath, where Druids old
have been,

Where mantles grey have rustled by, and swept the
nettles green ;

There is a joy in every spot, made known in days of
old,

New to the foot, altho' each tale a hundred times be
told.

* * *

And if a madman could have leave to pass a healthful
day,

To tell his forehead's swoon, and faint when first began
decay.

* * *

One hour, half idiot he stands, by mossy waterfall,
But in the very next, he reads his soul's memorial ;
He reads it on the mountain's height, where chance he
may sit down,

Upon rough marble diadem, that hill's eternal crown.
Yet be his anchor e'er so fast, room is there none for
prayer,

That man may never lose his mind on mountains bleak
and bare ;

That he may stray, league after league, some great
birth-place to find,

And keep his vision clear from speck, his inward sight
unblind.

There exists a miniature, of which I have a copy through the kindness of the lady, who knew so well to appreciate his heart and genius, that may be remembered by some of his admirers, for it appeared in the exhibition of the year at Somerset-house. He has been taken at a moment of inspiration; a more complete idealism of a poet was never struck out by the fire of genius. His eyes are "in a fine frenzy rolling." One hand is leaning forward over a book—probably that book which was the choice companion of his journey to Italy, Shakspeare's Minor Poems,—whilst the other, half closed, serves as a support to his upcast countenance. The features are finely moulded, but death is written in his pale and almost haggard features, whilst the spirit seems to defy the decay of the body, and which we see is inevitable. This miniature, if not painted for, is in the possession of the above lady; would that we had something of the same kind of Shelley! As a likeness it was perfect, and as a work of art, a gem. It is by the hand of that distinguished artist, Mr. Severn.

“It was about this time,” continues my kind correspondent, “that I became acquainted with Keats. We met frequently at the house of a mutual friend, (not Leigh Hunt’s,) but neither then nor afterwards did I see anything in his manner to give the idea that he was brooding over any secret grief or disappointment. His conversation was in the highest degree interesting, and his spirits good, excepting at moments when anxiety regarding his brother’s health dejected them. His own illness, that commenced in January 1820, began from inflammation in the lungs, from cold. In coughing, he ruptured a blood-vessel. An hereditary tendency to consumption was aggravated by the excessive susceptibility of his temperament, for I never see those often quoted lines of Dryden, without thinking how exactly they applied to Keats :—

The fiery soul, that working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay.”

From the commencement of his malady, he was forbidden to write a line of poetry, and his failing health, joined to the uncertainty of his prospects, often threw him into deep melancholy.

The letter, p. 295 of Shelley's Remains, from Mr. Finch, seems to be calculated to give a very false idea of Keats. That his sensibility was most acute, is true, and his passions were very strong, but not violent, if by that term, violence of temper is implied. His was no doubt susceptible, but his anger seemed rather to turn on himself than on others, and in moments of greatest irritation, it was only by a sort of savage despondency that he sometimes grieved and wounded his friends. Violence such as the letter describes, was quite foreign to his nature. For more than a twelvemonth before quitting England, I saw him every day, often witnessed his sufferings, both mental and bodily, and I do not hesitate to say, that he never could have addressed an unkind expression, much less a violent one, to any human being.

During the last few months before leaving his native country, his mind underwent a fierce conflict; for whatever in moments of grief or disappointment he might say or think, his most ardent desire was to live to redeem his name from the obloquy cast upon it;* nor was it till he knew his death inevitable, that he eagerly wished to die. Mr. Finch's letter goes on to say,

* A strong confirmation of this ardent desire of Keats's, to leave behind him a name, is to be found in the two exquisite Odes, *To the Nightingale*, and *On Psyche*.

“O for a draught of vintage, that has been
Cooled a long time in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance and Provençal song and sun-burnt mirth !”

and in the latter of these Odes,—

“Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of the mind,
Where branched thoughts new grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines, shall murmur in the wind ;
Far, far above shall those dark-clustered trees
Hedge the wild ridged mountains, steep by steep,
And there by zephyrs, streams and birds and bees,
The moss-laid Druids shall be lulled to sleep ;
And in the midst of this wide quietness,
A rosy sanctuary will I dress,

—“ Keats might be judged insane,”—“ I believe the fever that consumed him, might have brought on a temporary species of delirium, that made his friend Mr. Severn’s task a painful one.

This gentleman, who Shelley says “almost risked his life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance on his dying friend ;”—and of whom he augurs the future career in the creations of his pencil,—an augury that has been fully verified,—had early in the autumn of 1820, embarked with Keats on board a trading vessel for Naples, I imagine at the beginning of September, for Leigh Hunt, in the *Indicator*, makes

With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,
With buds and bells and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e’er could feign,
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same ;
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm love in.”

It is plain that Italy was in his thoughts when he was thus inspired, and indeed he had then projected a visit to that country—sometimes buoyed up with the hope beyond hope of recovering his health, but more of re-establishing his fame.

him the following adieu :—" Ah ! dear friend, as valued a one as thou art a poet, John Keats, we cannot, after all, find in our hearts to be glad now thou art gone away with the swallows to a kindlier climate. 'The rains began to fall heavily the moment thou wast to go—we do not say, poetlike, for thy departure. One tear, in an honest eye, is more precious to the sight than all the metaphysical weepings in the universe, and thou didst leave many starting, to think how many months it would be till they saw you again. And yet thou didst love metaphorical tears too, in their way, and couldst always liken everything in nature to something great or small. And the rains that beat against thy cabin window will set, we fear, thy ever-working wits upon many comparisons, which ought to be much more painful to others than thyself. Heaven mend their envious and ignorant numskulls ! But thou hast a mighty soul in a little body, and the kind cares of the former, for all about thee, shall no longer subject the latter to the chance of

impressions which it scorns, and the soft skies of Italy shall breathe balm upon it, and thou shalt return with thy friend the nightingale, and make all thy other friends as happy with thy voice, as they are sorrowful to miss it. The little cage thou didst sometimes share with us, looks as deficient without thee as thy present one may do without us. But farewell for a while ! Thy heart is in our fields, and thou wilt soon be back to rejoin it."

Alas ! these aspirations were vain. But how unwillingly, even against hope, do we cease to hope ! His artist friend and himself, made a very unpropitious voyage,—it was full of mishaps. At the very commencement of it, they were obliged by stress of weather, to put into a port on the coast of Hampshire, and disembark. They met with a violent storm on the passage, and it is a miracle that Keats, in his state, did not die on board. Keats says in a letter, also communicated to me by the same lady,—the only letter, I believe, which he sent from Italy, a day

or two after reaching Naples, penned apparently on board.—“It has been unfortunate for me that one of the passengers is a young lady in a consumption. Her imprudence has vexed me very much. The knowledge of her complaint—the flushings in her face, all her bad symptoms have preyed upon me. They would have done so, had I been in good health. I shall feel a load off me, when she vanishes out of my sight.” Keats’s symptoms seem to have been very much aggravated by this ill-judged voyage. He appears to have reached Naples on the 24th October, prostrated in mind and body. His stay there was short, and his journey to Rome attended by great inconvenience; for one whole day they were without food, a severe privation to one so debilitated. I imagine this to have occurred on the crossing the Pontine Marshes, from Mola de Gaetà to Cisterna. Indeed, this journey, combined with the voyage, would have tried the constitution of one in health, but was fatal to an invalid.

He arrived in Rome half dead, and I am enabled to give extracts of letters written by a mutual friend of Keats and the lady to whom I am so much indebted, to her mother, that paint the last illness and suffering of the poor poet with a faithful pencil.

“Rome, Feb. 21st.

“MY DEAR MRS. —,

“I have just got your letter of the 15th, —the contrast of your quiet, friendly home, with this lonely place, and our poor suffering Keats, brings the tears into my eyes. I wish many times that he had never left you. His recovery must have been impossible, before he left England, and his excessive grief would, in any case, have made it so. In your case, he seems to me like an infant in its mother's arms. You would have soothed his pains, and his death might have been eased by the presence of his many friends; but here, with one solitary friend, in a place

savage for an invalid, he has had another pang added to the many.

“ I have had the hardest task. I have kept him alive week after week. He had refused all food, but I tried him every way—left him no excuse. Many times I have prepared his meals six times over, and kept from him the trouble I have had in so doing. I have not been able to leave him—that is, I dared not do so, except when he slept. Had he come here alone, he would have sunk into the grave in silence, and we should not have known one syllable about him. This reflection repays me for what I have done.

* * * *

“ It is impossible to conceive what the sufferings of this poor fellow have been. Now he lies still and calm—if I say *now*, I shall say too much. At times I have even hopes that he will recover, but the doctor shakes his head, and Keats will not hear that he is better. The thought of recovery is beyond anything dreadful

to him. We dare not now perceive any improvement in his health, for the hope of death seems to be his only comfort. He talks of the quiet grave, as the first rest he will ever have had.

* * * * *

“In the last week a great desire for books came over his mind. I got him all those at hand, and for three days the charm lasted; but now it is gone; yet he is very calm, and more and more reconciled to his misfortunes.

* * * * *

“Little or no change has taken place in Keats since the commencement of this letter, except that his mind is growing to greater quietness and peace. This has its rise from the increasing weakness of his body; but it seems like a delightful sleep to me, who have been beating about in the tempest of his mind so long. To-night he has talked very much to me, but so easily that he at last fell into a pleasant sleep. Among the many things he has to-night re-

quested, this is the principal, that on his grave should be inscribed,—

Here lies one whose name was writ in water.

* * * * *

“*Such* a letter has come—I gave it to Keats, supposing it to be one of yours—but it proved sadly otherwise. The glances of that letter tore him to pieces. The effects were on him for many days. He did not read it—he could not; but requested me to place it in the coffin, with a purse and a letter (unopened) of his sister.

* * * * *

“The doctor has been here. He thinks Keats worse. He says the expectoration is the most dreadful he ever saw—He never met with an instance where the patient was so quickly pulled down. Keats’s inward grief must have been beyond all limits. He says he was fretted to death. From the first drops of blood, he knew he must die. No common chance of living was for him,—

* * * * *

“A few days after these melancholy and interesting details were penned, Keats breathed his last—slept sweetly “as a tired child.” His dying moments were as tranquil as those of a child; he was resigned, more than resigned to die,—he had longed ardently for death, and hailed it as his best friend—had hunted for it more than for hidden treasures. Almost his last words were,—“I feel the daisies growing over me—Shelley calls them ‘the stars that never set.’” He had, on hearing of Keats’s intention of proceeding to Italy, made him an offer through Leigh Hunt, of a home with him in Pisa; but Keats, with his love of independence, and knowledge of the trouble and anxiety which his state of health, bodily and mental, would cause, although he gratefully acknowledged, declined the invitation; nor was Shelley aware, on my going to Rome in February, that Keats was so near his end. I was the bearer, from Shelley, of a large packet of letters or MSS.

for his poet-friend, and which, ignorant of his death, that took place a few days after my arrival, on the 23d February,—not on the 27th of December, as erroneously stated in the Preface to *Adonais*—(the date of Mr. Gibson's letter must have been 13th June, not January, 1821,) I sent to his address. In the whirl and confusion consequent on a first sight of Rome, I did not, for some time, make inquiries about Keats,—and none of whom I did enquire, could give me any information respecting him; having no clue to any friend of his. Great cities are indeed great solitudes, and that this “child of grace and genius,” “the brave, gentle, and the beautiful,” should have fled like some “frail exhalation,” and the heartless world should have neither known nor cared for his fate and sufferings, nor shed a tear over his remains, is but a sad and true comment on the words of his friend,—“*This is a lonely place.*” It was some time, also, before Shelley was acquainted with his death, for in his letters to me at Rome, he does

not make any allusion to the subject. It has been stated to me by the lady already mentioned, that his papers (those, doubtless, of which I was the bearer among the number,) fell into the hands of Mr. Browne, who had intended to write his memoirs, and who unhappily died in New Zealand, whither he had gone to settle, before his task was completed. It is a mystery to me, why Mr. Browne, or Brown (I am not certain how spelt,) a gentleman little famed in the world of letters, should have been selected as Keats's biographer, instead of Leigh Hunt, or John Hamilton Reynolds, better known by the assumed name of Hamilton, under which he published a volume, entitled, *The Garden of Florence*, and other poems of great merit, in 1821, and promised at one time a second, in conjunction with Keats, of whom he says,—“He who is gone, was one of the kindest friends I ever possessed, and yet he was not kinder, perhaps to me, than to others. His intense mind and powerful feeling would, I truly believe, have done

the world some service, had his life been spared. He was of too sensitive a nature, and thus he was destroyed."

Either of these would have been the most appropriate chronicler,—the last was his oldest and most intimate friend, and he was attracted to the first, like Byron, by sympathy for his unjust imprisonment, and a similarity of opinion on politics,—for Keats's were most liberal, and not merely confined to words, but actually shown,—a record of which would not be devoid of interest.

Among Keats's MSS. was a tragedy, entitled "Otho the Great," a subject inspired by the pages of Tacitus, and on which it appears Shelley had formed an idea of writing a poem, of which Mrs. Shelley has given us two stanzas. The master-passion of Keats's drama was jealousy. It was offered to Drury Lane or Covent Garden, and rejected; but that rejection is no proof of its demerits, for after the review of his *Endymion* in the *Quarterly*, it is not likely, had it been a

masterpiece, that it would have been accepted ; and following the example of Mr. Griffiths' play, which was brought out twenty years after its rejection, Keats's may yet make its appearance.

Keats was an ardent admirer of Shakspeare, —and after the manner of Sheridan Knowles, adopted the phraseology of the old masters. In the folio Shakspeare before me, the lines he most admired in King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, and Troilus and Cressida, (the last two plays doubtless studied with a view to his own,) are marked and underlined ; to the latter he has appended several notes, and suggested some emendations in the text. In the passage,—

Sith every action that has gone before,
Whereof we have record, trial did draw,
Bias and thwart, not answering the aim,
And that unbodied figure of the thought
That gav't surmised shape,—

he has affixed the following note :—

“The genius of Shakspeare was an innate uni-

versality,—wherefore he laid the achievement of human intellect prostrate beneath his indolent and kingly gaze. He could do easily man's utmost—his plan of tasks to come was not of this world. If what he proposed to do hereafter would not, in the idea, answer the aim, how tremendous must have been his conception of ultimates !”

This commentary may serve to shew what was working in Keats's mind—the distrust of himself—almost despair, at the comparison of his own labours with the unpremeditated effusions of Shakspeare.

The same interesting volume contains in the blank leaves two poems,—a sonnet, “On sitting down to read King Lear once again ;” and “Lines on seeing a lock of Milton's hair ;” which, though not contained in his published volumes, have, I believe, been given to the world in periodicals.

A comic poem was also in Mr. Browne's possession, of Keats's, written in the Spencer

metre, of which a few stanzas appeared in the Indicator of August 23rd, 1820, under the pseudo name of Lucy V. L. This poem contained also a parody on Byron's farewell, and my informant says, possessed a vein of dry wit and much humour, of which my readers may judge from the specimen to which I refer them. The paper is headed "Coaches."

The editor of the Athenæum has drawn a parallel between Shelley and Keats,—a parallel that reminds me of what Göthe says of the controversy between the Germans, respecting the comparative merits of himself and Schiller; and on which he remarks,—“They may think themselves lucky dogs in having two such fellows to dispute about.” Mr. D—— says “Shelley was a worshipper of truth, Keats of beauty; Shelley had the greater power, Keats the finer imagination,—both were single-hearted, admirable men. When we look into the world—nay, not to judge others, when we look into our own breasts, we should despair, if such men did not occasion-

ally appear among us. Shelley and Keats were equal enthusiasts, had the same hope of the moral improvement of society, and the ultimate triumph of truth; and Shelley, who lived longest, carried all the generous feelings of youth into manhood. Age enlarged, not narrowed his sympathies, and learning bowed down his humanity to feel its brotherhood with the humblest of its fellow-creatures. If not judged by creeds and conventional opinions, Shelley must be considered a moral teacher, both by precept and example; he scattered the seed of truth, so it appeared to him, everywhere, and upon all occasions,—confident, that however disregarded, however long it might be buried, it would not perish, but spring up hereafter in the sunshine of its welcome, and its golden fruitage be garnered by grateful men. Keats had naturally much less of this political philosophy, but he had neither less resolution, less hope of, or less good will towards man. Lord Byron's opinion, that he was killed by the reviewers, is wholly ridicu-

lous, though his epitaph and the angry feelings of his friends might countenance it. Keats died of hereditary consumption."

The editor adds, that "he was fast sinking before either Blackwood or the Quarterly poured out their malignant venom." There he was mistaken, and misinformed, as I have already proved, for he was only first attacked with that deadly malady, eighteen months after the appearance of the articles.

Agreeing with Mr. D. in the main, though not admitting that Keats had the finer imagination, I will state what Shelley's opinions were of his poetry. Those he entertained respecting *Endymion*, are already before the public. He often lamented that, under the adoption of false canons of taste, he spoiled by their affectation his finest passages. But in the volume that Keats published in 1820, he perceived in every one of these productions a marked and continually progressing improvement, and hailed with delight his release from his leading-strings, his

emancipation from what he called "a perverse and limited school." The Pot of Basil, and the Eve of St. Agnes, he read and re-read with ever new delight, and looked upon Hyperion as almost faultless, grieving that it was but a fragment, and that Keats had not been encouraged to complete a work worthy of Milton. He used to say that "the scenery and drawing of his Saturn De-throned, and the fallen Titans, surpassed those of Satan and his rebellious angels in the Paradise Lost,—possessing more human interest; that the whole poem was supported throughout with a colossal grandeur equal to the subject." Shelley had this little volume continually in his pocket, the best proof of his appreciation of its merits. Nothing more deeply affected Shelley than the premature removal from a world, that deserved to lose him, of Keats. Shelley thought that he died too soon for his fame, great as it is; had he lived to bask in the warm south, to drink deep of the warm south, to draw his inspiration from purer sources; had he not been flattered and

stimulated into writing from false models, turned as he was daily become more and more from the error of his ways, what might he not have produced? The prohibition of his physicians, to write after his first attack, was cruelly felt by Keats. Poetry had been his "safety valve." His imagination now preyed on itself—he longed to redeem his fame. Not that, as *some* accused him, he had been idle,—and when we consider that he had only begun to write in 1817, (he was little more than 24 when he died) one wonders that less than four years should have effected so much. His earliest productions—though they were so disfigured by a false and affected phraseology, that the one beginning, "I stood tiptoe upon a little hill," and several others published in 1817, but written some of them in 1815 and 1816, might be mistaken for his prototype's. If we compare them with those of Shelley, how far superior are they, how much greater promise do they not hold out of ultimate excellency! and his more finished ones make us

say with Leigh Hunt,—“Undoubtedly he has taken his seat with the oldest and best of our poets.”

I shall complete this imperfect sketch of Keats with a brief notice of the elegy Shelley composed on his death, in the autumn of that year, at the Baths of St Julian. It breathes all the tenderness of Moschus and Bion; and speaking of Adonais, in a letter, he says, “that had he received an account of the closing scene of the life of that great genius, he could not have composed it. The enthusiasm of the imagination overpowering the sentiment. Not the least valuable part of that idyll is the picture Shelley has drawn of himself among the mourners at the funeral,—where he has not forgotten Byron and Moore.

’Mid others of less note, came one frail form,
A phantom among men, companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm,
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on nature’s naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray,
With naked steps o’er the world’s wildness,

And his own thoughts along that rugged way
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

A pard-like spirit, beautiful and swift !
A love in desolation masked. A power
Girt round with weakness : it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour.
It is a dying lamp—a falling shower—
A breaking billow !—even while we speak,
Is it not broken ? On the withering flower,
The killing sun smiles brightly ; on a cheek
The lip can burn in blood, even while the heart may
break.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white and pied and blue,
And a light spear topped with a cypress-cone,
(Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew,
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew)
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it ; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart—
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart !

How pathetic is the close—how it hangs upon
the ear like some passage in one of Beethoven's
Sonatas, or a “Melodious Tear” of Bellini !
What is the whole poem but a prophecy of his

early fate—an augury of his soon rejoining his friend?

In Adonais, as much as in any of his works, he has developed his Platonism, his metaphysical ideas of intellectual beauty. How sublime is—

The one remains—the many pass away—
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly—
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments.

And yet, speaking of Adonais, a contemporary critic, no more capable of appreciating it than a penny-a-liner or Grub-street poet, says, “We have always given room in our columns to this writer's (Shelley's) merit, and we will not now repeat our conviction of his incurable absurdity. Adonais, an Elegy, is the form in which Mr. Shelley puts forth his woes. We give a verse at random, premising that *there is no story in the elegy!* and that it contains fifty-five stanzas, which are, to our seeming, altogether *unconnected*, incoherent, and nonsensical! The poetry of the

work is contemptible—a mere collection of bloated words, heaped on each other without order, harmony, or meaning, the refuse of a school-boy's common-place book, full of the vagaries of pastoral poetry—‘yellow gems, and blue stars, bright Phœbus, and rosy-fingered Aurora;’ and of such stuff is Keats's elegy composed.” Oh, Shame! where is thy blush?

On quitting Shelley, I left him with less regret, from thinking that in introducing him to the Williams's, they would form the charm of his solitary life, and it is a satisfaction to me to think that I conferred a mutual benefit on both. Williams and myself had hunted the tiger in another hemisphere, had been constant correspondents in India, and on my return home took a *campagne* together at Geneva, and revived a friendship such as I have never felt for any other individual. A more noble, unworldly being never existed than Williams. He had been educated at Eton, was originally in the navy, and afterwards entered the 8th Dragoons, and unlike

most officers, had highly cultivated his mind, and possessed considerable dramatic talent, and a deepinsight into the workings of human nature. During the spring he had written a play, taken from the interweaving of two stories in Boccaccio, and Shelley had assisted him in the work, and supplied him with an epithalamium for music, since incorrectly published, and which I give in its original form.

Epithalamium.

Night, with all thine eyes look down !

Darkness shed its holiest dew !

When ever smiled the inconstant moon

On a pair so true ?

Hence, coy hour ! and quench thy light,

Lest eyes see their own delight !

Hence, swift hour ! and thy loved flight

Oft renew.

Boys.

Oh joy ! oh fear ! what may be done

In the absence of the sun ?

Come along !

The golden gates of sleep unbar !

When strength and beauty meet together,
Kindles their image like a star
In a sea of glassy weather.

Hence, coy hour ! and quench thy light,
Let eyes see their own delight !

Hence, swift hour ! and thy loved flight
Oft renew.

Girls.

Oh joy ! oh fear ! what may be done
In the absence of the sun ?

Come along !

Fairies ! sprites ! and angels keep her !

Holiest powers, permit no wrong !

And return, to wake the sleeper,

Dawn, ere it be long.

Hence, swift hour ! and quench thy light,

Lest eyes see their own delight !

Hence, coy hour ! and thy loved flight

Oft renew.

Boys and Girls.

Oh joy ! oh fear ! what will be done
In the absence of the sun ?

Come along !

Williams (who was, by the way, a lineal descendant from one of Cromwell's daughters) had, with his moderate wishes, what might be considered a sufficiency, but unhappily, a great part of his fortune was swallowed up in the bankruptcy of a house in Calcutta, where it was lodged. Another misfortune attended him, soon after taking up his abode in Pisa; he was seized with a pulmonary complaint, which he attributed to sleeping in a bed where a consumptive patient had died. The Italians, and still more the Spanish, consider the atmosphere of rooms to be infected by such patients, and the laws (though the regulations of the police are sometimes infringed, which did not occur in Keats's case) strictly enjoin that all the furniture in the apartments of those who have died of the complaint, is to be destroyed. Williams certainly when he came to Pisa never showed any symptoms of phthisis, which soon took deep root in his constitution, and as appears by a letter of Shelley's, where he says, "Williams must go on

with the *Doccia*," excited great alarm in Shelley, who soon learnt to love him with the tenderest regard. Pisa was full of victims to this insidious disease, and I have often observed Shelley in our walks made deeply melancholy by the sight of a lovely and interesting girl, crawling along—

A dying lady, lean and pale,
Tottering forth,

and basking in the sun, like a half-animated butterfly escaped untimely from its shell, whose wings had no power to raise it,—those beautiful wings flapping impotently in the dust. Williams also (as Keats had been on board of the ship,) was deeply affected by the spectacle. He had also a great taste for drawing; his sketches were spirited and masterly; he could illustrate happily from the ideas of others, and took likenesses in general very striking, and it is to him that we are indebted for the only semblance of Shelley that exists. It was not a very happy miniature,

but I should conceive no one so difficult to portray, the expression of his countenance being ever flitting and varied,—now depressed and melancholy, now lit up like that of a spirit,—making him look one moment forty and the next eighteen. It is said that Mr. Severn has made a portrait of Shelley from memory, as Count d'Orsay had done of Byron; but I have never seen the former, hoping it may be as valuable as the accomplished foreigner's. Williams's sketch has been, it strikes me, greatly altered for the worse in the engraving; the face is too full and oval, the nose too straight and regular,—the whole wanting in that fire which in moments of inspiration animated him. But to have arrested the smallest shadow of resemblance of that great genius is something.

The mutual delicacy of health of Shelley and Williams drew them closer to each other, and the similarity of their traits and pursuits served to rivet still more the tie of friendship. Williams soon learned to understand Shelley—to

appreciate him as a poet and a man—and Shelley found in him one who could sympathise with his sufferings, and to whom he could lay open his heart. Mrs. Shelley, speaking of Williams, says, “that he was her husband’s favourite companion, that his love of adventure and manly exercise also corresponded with Shelley’s taste.” She calls him in another place, “the chosen and beloved sharer of his pleasures,—and alas ! his fate.”

These manly exercises, to which she alludes, were practice with a pistol, and boating. Williams, from his early sea-life, was an excellent sailor, and knew all the mysteries of the craft, could cut out sails, make blocks, &c. The Arno has no pleasure-boats, and its shallowness rendered it difficult to get any that drew little water enough to float. They, however, overcame the difficulty, and constructed one, such as the huntsmen carry about with them in the Mahremma, something like a Welch coracle ; and in this they ventured down to Leghorn, returning

to Pisa by the canal, when missing the direct cut, they got entangled among the weeds, and upset. This boat was a great amusement to them during their *villagiatura* this summer (1821). Shelley fixed himself again at the baths of St. Julian, and Williams at Pagnano, four miles distant. I have heard Shelley often speak with rapture of the excursions they made together. The canal fed by the Serchio, of the clearest water, is so rapid, that they were obliged to tow the boat up against the current; but the swift descent, through green banks enamelled with flowers and overhung with trees, that mirrored themselves on its glassy surface, gave him a wonderful delight. He has left a record of these trips in a poem entitled "The Boat on the Serchio," and calls Williams and himself, Melchior and Lionel.

The chain is loosed, the sails are spread,
The living breath is fresh behind,
As with dew and sunrise fed,
Comes the laughing morning wind.

The sails are full, the boat makes head
Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,
Then flags with intermitting course,
And hangs upon the wave,
Which fervid from its mountain source,
Shallow, smooth, and strong doth come ;
Swift as fire, tempestuously
It sweeps into the affrighted sea.
In morning's smile its eddies coil,
Its billows sparkle, toss, and boil,
Torturing all its quiet light
Into columns pure and bright.

A boat was to Shelley, what a plaything is to a child. I have mentioned that he early acquired the taste when a boy, his father having one at Warnham pond, a lake of considerable extent, or rather two connected by a draw-bridge, which led to a pleasure-garden and boat-house. He was nineteen when he used to float paper flotillas at Oxford,—older when he made a sail of a ten-pound note on the Serpentine, and I have no doubt would, with any boy, at twenty-eight, have done the same. The water was his fatal element. He crossed the Channel to Calais in

an open boat, a rash experiment ; when at school, the greatest pleasure he enjoyed was an excursion we made to Richmond from Brentford—a pleasure perhaps the more sweet, being a stolen one. He descended the Rhine on a sort of raft. He made a voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Crickdale ; was nearly lost in coming from the Isle of Man ; at Geneva, past days and nights on the lake : and now, reader, excuse this recapitulation, though imperfect,—behold him on the Serchio.

If there was anything in Thalaba that delighted him above the rest, it was the fairy boat that figures in that interesting tale. Shelley made a chaloupe enter into the scenery of most of his poems, from *Queen Mab* down to the *Witch of Atlas*. More beautiful passages cannot be found in any writer than those in which he treats of this subject. In *Alastor*, the boat is “a thing of life,” is part of the man, and we take a lively interest in its dangers.

A little shallop floating near the shore,
Caught the impatient wandering of his gaze.
It had been long abandoned, for its sides
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its frail joints
Swayed with the undulations of the tide.
A restless impulse urged him to embark,
And meet lone Death on the drear ocean's waste,
For well he knew that mighty shadow loves
The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

* * * A whirlwind swept it on
With fierce gusts, and precipitating force,
Through the white ridges of the chafed sea.
The waves arose,—higher and higher still
Their fierce necks writhed beneath the tempest's
scourge,
Like serpents struggling in a vulture's grasp.

* * *
Now pausing on the edge of the riven wave.

And we breathe again when we come to—

“safely fled.”

The Revolt of Islam owes much of its charm
to the boat of pearl in which Laon and Cythna
made their voyage. I refer to the end of the
poem, from the 32nd to the 41st stanza.

Alas ! the subject is not yet exhausted.

This his second summer at the baths of St. Julian was perhaps one of the happiest Shelley ever spent abroad. The charm of Mrs. Williams's society, and of their children (they had two), served also to heighten its agreeableness. She was an accomplished and elegant woman, not only a superior player on the harp and guitar, but had a sweet and cultivated voice. Shelley was particularly fond of music, and delighted in her simple airs, some of which she had brought with her, in memory, from the East. For her were composed the exquisite lines, "I arise from dreams of thee," adapted to the celebrated Persian air sung by the Knautch girls, "*Tazee be tazee no be no*," and the Arietto which has been admirably set by an English composer,—

The keen stars are twinkling !

And the moon rising brightly among them,

Dear Jane!

and that gem of genius, entitled "With a Guitar;" in the Introduction to which, the names of Miranda and Ferdinand were meant to typify that lady and her husband—himself Ariel. Many other of the lyrical pieces written about this time, such as "The Magnetic Lady to her Patient," "The Invitation," "The Recollection," "When the Lamp is shattered,"—were addressed to Mrs. Williams.

The sympathy of these gifted persons contributed much to exorcise from Shelley the demon of despondency, that often lay on him like a nightmare; and in them he found a refuge and shelter from the world that never ceased to be his foe. The cold, censorious, formal, conventional world, often puts interpretations the most unworthy on the friendship between two persons of different sexes; but a purer being than Mrs. Williams cannot exist. Not a breath of scandal could possibly attach to her fame. The verses addressed to her always passed through the hands of Williams himself, and who had too much con-

fidence in the virtue of one devotedly his, to harbour for a moment any jealousy of an attachment the most innocent and disinterested. Effusions such as these must not be interpreted literally. Should we allow ourselves to put wrong constructions on such outpourings of the soul, such Platonic aspirations, what are we to say for those of the L. E. L.s, and Lady Emilias of the day? "By the intercourse with—the very touch of that which is beautiful, the poet brings forth and produces what he formerly conceived." We must look upon such compositions as possessing little or nothing of the actual—as (like the *Epipsychidion*) mere idealisms,—as "exercises on amatory matters," such as Diotima instructs Socrates to employ himself in, adding, that "Love, and everything else that desires anything, desires that which is absent, and beyond its reach,—that which it has not itself, that which it wants; such are things of which there are desire and love." These counsels, Shelley, whose hand-

book was Plato, constantly followed. As another specimen of this state of his mind, this yearning after a love that, alas! continued to elude his grasp, I might point out "The Zucca," written at this very period, and—

"I loved.—O no! I mean not one of ye!
Or any earthly one; though ye are dear
As human heart to human heart may be,
I loved—I know not what—but this low sphere,
And all that it contains, contains not thee!
Thou whom seen nowhere, I feel everywhere,
Dim object of my soul's idolatry."

And in "The Question," where he dreams of having made a nosegay, he ends with—

I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it. Oh! *to whom?*

In August, leaving Mrs. Shelley at the Baths, Shelley, at the request of Lord Byron, travelled to Ravenna, there to meet and consult with him on the critical posture of his affairs. He had, as Shelley says, "formed a permanent sort of *liaison* with the Countess Guiccioli,"—who with

her father and brother, had made a hasty retreat from Romagna, and were then at Florence waiting for Lord Byron to join them. I say a hasty retreat, as applied to the fair countess; for her lord, the Count Guiccioli, had devised measures for shutting her up in a convent, and which she narrowly escaped. Lord Byron's situation at Ravenna was also far from a pleasant one. A contributor to the Westminster Review, among numerous other falsehoods, asserts that Lord Byron took no part in that abortive attempt at a revolution in the Papal territories. He says in his journal, "They mean to *insurrect* here, and are to honour me with a call thereupon. I shall not fall back;" and, "my life was not supposed to be particularly safe." Confirmations of his words to me,—“Had it not been for the Pope's minister, Cardinal Gonsalvo, perhaps the stiletto, had I not been openly assassinated, would have ended my days.” Many months after I had known him, in speaking of his love for Italy, and abhorrence of papal and

Austrian despotism, he pointed to some saddlebags lying on the floor of his room, and said, "There lies the firebrand. Those bags contain all the secrets of the conspiracy in Romagna. The names of—" there he stopped and turned the subject. His having these important documents in his possession, explains what Shelley says.— "The interest he took in the politics of Italy, and *the actions he performed* in consequence of it, are subjects not fit to be written."

That Lord Byron should have resorted to Shelley in his difficulties, who says,— "It is destined that I should have some active part in everybody's affairs whom I approach," shews great confidence in his judgment, and reliance on his advice. And strange to say, that ill-judging as he always was in his own affairs, no one in those of others was more to be relied on. After canvassing the comparative merits and demerits, (not to mention Switzerland,) of Geneva, Lucca, Florence, Sienna, Prato, Pistoia and Pisa, the latter was eventually

fixed on. So much did the Countess Guiccioli build on Shelley, and his influence with Lord Byron, founded on his often expressed appreciation of his worth, that she writes to him, "Signore.—La vostra bonta mi fa ardita di chiedervi un favore. Non lo accordate voi? Non partite da Ravenna senza milordo." "Of course," remarks Shelley, "being now by all the laws of knighthood, captive to a lady's request, I shall not be at liberty on my *parole*, until Lord Byron is settled at Pisa."

It would seem that Shelley's peace of mind at Ravenna was troubled by scandal and malevolence. He says, "Lord Byron told me of a circumstance that shocks me exceedingly, because it exhibits a degree of desperate and wicked malice, for which I am at a loss to account. When I hear such things, my patience and my philosophy are put to a severe proof, whilst refrain from seeking out some obscure hiding place, where the countenance of man may never meet me more." Whatever this

dark charge might have been, I know not ; but one thing is clear, that Lord Byron disbelieved its truth.

It was with this foul calumny festering in his soul, that he goes on to say to Mrs. Shelley,—
“My great content would be to desert all human society—I would retire with you and our child, to a solitary isle in the sea,—would build a boat, and shut upon my retreat the flood-gates of the world. I would read no reviews, and talk with no authors. If I dare trust my imagination, it would tell me, that there are one or two chosen companions beside yourself whom I should desire. The other side of the alternative, for a medium ought not to be adopted, is to form ourselves a society of our own class, as much as possible in intellect or in feelings. Our roots never struck so deeply as at Pisa, and the transplanted tree flourishes not. The calumnies, the sources of which are deeper than we perceive, have ultimately for object the depriving us of the means of security

and subsistence. You will easily perceive the gradations by which calumny proceeds to pretext, pretext to persecution, and persecution to the ban of fire and water. It is for this, and not because this or that fool, or the whole universe of fools, curse and rail, that calumny is worth repeating or chastising."

How appropriately might be inscribed on Shelley's tomb, the pathetic Italian epitaph so common,—"*Implora pace. Implora eterna quiete.*"

It was on his arrival at Pisa, where Mrs. Shelley had domiciled herself, that he first wrote to Leigh Hunt, with a proposal respecting the so-much-discussed "Liberal." "He (Byron) purposes," Shelley says, in a letter dated 26th of August, 1821, "that you should come and go shares with him and me in a periodical work, to be conducted here, in which each of the contracting parties shall publish all their original compositions, and share the profits. He proposed it to Moore, but for some reason he was never

brought to bear." The reason, Mr. Moore gives, in the Life of Byron, as appears by the following extract from a letter to the noble poet.

"I heard some days ago that Leigh Hunt was on his way to you with his family, and the idea seems to be, that you and Shelley and he are to conspire together with the *Examiner*. I cannot believe this, and deprecate such a plan with all my might. I tremble even for you, with such a bankrupt Co. as * * * *;" (the asterisks might be filled up with Shelley, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt.) He calls them "an unholy alliance;" and adds, "recollect, the many buildings about St. Peter's almost overtop it."

In another letter, Moore says,—"I could not become a partner in this miscellaneous *pot au feu*, where the bad flavour of one ingredient is sure to taint all the rest."

Shelley, to return to his letter, says,—"Nothing should induce me to join in the profits. I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey, because there are

men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation in the worldly sense of the word, and I am as jealous for my friend as myself; but I suppose I shall at last make an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me. I know I need only ask."

Of Horace Smith I have often heard Shelley speak in terms of unqualified regard and attachment; indeed we have but to refer to his letters and lines addressed to Mrs. Gisborne, as a proof how much he esteemed his friendship—shewn to Shelley on all occasions, in kind offices, not less than in the liberal assistance he never refused him in his pecuniary distresses and straits, brought about, not by his own extravagance, for no man was more economical in his domestic arrangements, or more moderate in his expences; but by his excessive generosity, a generosity to imprudence—a reckless expenditure of his income for others, as lamented by Mrs. Shelley in the strongest terms.

Shelley possessed the quality of conferring benefits with such delicacy, that those benefited could not feel the weight of the obligation; falsifying the proverb, that benefits are easier to forgive than injuries.

On the occasion of his friend Leigh Hunt's leaving England, he, as proposed in the letter quoted, did apply to Horace Smith, who not only advanced the passage money for his friend and his family, but a very considerable sum for the payment of his debts; as much, I think Shelley told me, as £1400. The passage money was unhappily forfeited, though I know not from what cause, and Leigh Hunt's friends, I have heard, raised a sufficient sum by a subscription to his poems, to enable him to execute his project; Shelley lamenting that he had not the means of making a second time the requisite advance for the voyage.

As to the controversy between Leigh Hunt and Lord Byron, that arose out of the *Liberal*, I shall not allude to it; and end this part of

the subject by quoting a letter from Shelley, dated some months after.

“ My Dear Byron,—

“ I enclose you a letter from Leigh Hunt, which annoys me on more than one account. You will observe the P.S., and you know me well enough to feel how painful the task is set me in commenting upon it. Hunt has urged me more than once to lend him this money. My answer consisted in sending him all I could spare, which I have now literally done. Your kindness in fitting up a part of your rooms for his accommodation, I severely feel, and willingly accepted from you on his part; but believe me, without the slightest intention of imposing, or, if I could help it, allowing to be imposed, any heavier task on your purse. As it has come to this, in spite of my exertions, I will not conceal from you the low ebb of my own money affairs, at the pre-

sent moment; that is, my utter incapacity of assisting Hunt further.

“ I do not think poor Hunt’s promise to pay in a given time is worth much; but mine is less subject to uncertainty, and I should be happy to be responsible for any engagement he may have proposed to you. I am so much annoyed by this subject, that I hardly know what to write, and much less what to say; and I have need of all your indulgence in judging of both my feelings and expressions.

“ Yours most faithfully and sincerely,

“ P. B. SHELLEY.”

I quote this letter, not contained in the collection of Shelley’s letters, published by Mrs. Shelley, in order to shew the extreme delicacy of feeling that reigns in it,—the active benevolence that overcame the repugnance with which he naturally sat down to pen such a letter. What must it not have cost him!

Change we the subject.

I reached Pisa for the second time in December. Lord Byron had already arrived, and was settled in the Casa Lanfranchi. Shelley had taken up his abode on the opposite side of the Lung' Arno. His apartment, however, looked to the west, and it was basking in the sun when I entered; and I may here add, that during almost all that winter, such is the divine climate of Pisa, we dined with the windows open. At his house, I first saw the Countess Guiccioli, then a strikingly handsome woman. Those who saw her at that time, might have supposed that she had sat to Georgione for a celebrated picture in the Dresden gallery—a gentleman with two ladies; she bore such a striking resemblance to one of these, that on the left of the groupe; possessing the same character of features, bright auburn hair and eyes, that seem indigenal to, or hereditary in the fair Venetians. For many weeks she passed her *soirees* at Shelley's; a more perfectly amiable, interesting, and feminine person I never met. Her at-

tachment to Byron, whose name she pronounced, laying a strong stress on the *y*, (and her voice was the most musical I ever remember in an Italian,) had been her first; she loved him with a devotion of which no women are so capable as the Italians, and has remained constant to that love—unchanged and unchangeable. I met her many years after, at the baths of Lucca, and at Florence, where at a ball given by the Prince Borghese, singularly enough, I, at the request of Mr. King, now Lord Lovelace, introduced her to him; little thinking that he would afterwards have married the Ada of Childe Harold. But to revert to Shelley.

I found him an altered man; his health had sensibly improved, and he had shaken off much of that melancholy and depression, to which he had been subject during the last year. He anticipated with delight the arrival of Leigh Hunt—was surrounded by many friends. The Williams's were a never failing resource to him and his daily visit to Byron was a distraction

and ever new excitement. Nor this alone,—he accompanied him in his evening drives, assisted as wont in the pistol-practice, for which he formed an early predilection at Oxford. A friend speaking of several contradictions in his appearance and character at that time, says, “His ordinary preparations for a rural walk formed a remarkable contrast with his mild aspect and pacific habits. He provided himself with a pair of duelling pistols, and good store of powder and ball, and when he came to a solitary spot, he pinned a card, or fixed some other mark upon a tree or a bank, and amused himself by firing at it. He was a pretty good shot, and was much delighted at his success. The same gentleman says of himself, that having accidentally shot the target in the centre, Shelley ran to the card, examined it attentively several times, and more than once measured the distance on the spot where I had stood.” How often have I seen him do the same! I imagine that it was Shelley, who at Geneva, inoculated Lord Byron (whose

lameness made his out-door amusements very limited,) with the taste. These trials of skill were Shelley's favourite recreation, and even the preparations for it occupied his thoughts agreeably, for he generally made and carried to the ground a target to be used on the occasion, and habit enabled him to manufacture them with great neatness. I have often been surprised to see the poet occupied in making circles and bull's eyes. Shelley used to wonder that Byron shot so well, for his aim was long, and his hand trembled. Shelley's was all firmness. He was a very indifferent horseman—had an awkward and unsafe seat—which is very singular, as he had very early been used to ride, though it is probable that he had almost from boyhood discontinued the habit. Byron's seat was not the best in the world, nor his stud very famous. The animal who carried him was loaded with fat, and resembled, if she were not one, a Flanders mare. She was encumbered with a sliding martingale, a hussar saddle, and holsters with

pistols ; was remarkable for the lowness of her action, and the amble, her usual pace, which, from its ease, made her a favourite with her master.

Shelley and myself generally visited Byron at the same hour, between two and three ; indeed, I believe there never passed a day, for many months, without our meeting at the Lanfranchi, and they had invented a sort of macaronic language that was very droll. They called firing, *tiring* ; hitting, *colping* ; missing, *mancating* ; riding, *cavalling* ; walking, *a-spasing*, &c.

Byron the man and Byron the poet were as different as mind and matter. He possessed two natures—the human and the divine. I have often heard Shelley, almost in the language of a gifted German lady-writer, say,—“The poet is a different being from the rest of the world. Imagination steals over him—he knows not whence. Images float before him—he knows not their home. Struggling and contending powers are engendered within him, which no outward

impulse, no inward passion awakened. He utters sentiments he never meditated. He creates persons whose original he had never seen; but he cannot command the power that called them out of nothing. He must wait till the God or dæmon genius breathes it into him. He has higher powers than the generality of men, and the most distinguished abilities; but he is possessed by a still higher power. He prescribes laws, he overturns customs and opinions, he begins and ends an epoch, like a God; but he is a blind, obedient, officiating priest in the temple of God." Byron also was fully indued with this persuasion, for he says,—“Poetry is a distinct faculty of the soul, and has no more to do with the every-day individual, than the inspirations of the Pythianess when removed from the tripod.” In his Essay on Poetry, Shelley more fully develops this sentiment, and says,—“Poets are the hyerophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts on the present; the words which express what they understand not; the

trumpet that sounds to battle, and feels not what it inspires ; the influence which is moved, but moves not. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world !” And again,—“ They measure the circumference, and sound the depth of human nature with a comprehensive, all-penetrating spirit, at the manifestations of which they are themselves, perhaps, the most sincerely astonished,—for it is less *their* spirit than the spirit of the age.”

But speaking of Byron in his human capacity. The Byron of England and Geneva, and the Byron of Italy, or at least Pisa, were widely different persons. His talk was, at that time, a dilution of his letters, full of *persiflage* and *calem-bourg*. Shelley used to compare him to Voltaire, to whom he would have thought it the greatest compliment to be compared; for if there was any one writer whom he admired more than another, it was the author of *Candide*. Like Voltaire, he looked upon converse as a relaxation, not an exercise of mind. Both professed the same speculative—I might say, sceptical turn of mind ; the

same power of changing the subject from the grave to the gay ; the same mastery over the sublime, the pathetic, the comic. No, he differed from the philosopher of Ferney in one respect,—he never scoffed at religion. His boss of veneration was strongly developed, and had he returned to England, he would, I have little doubt, have died, as Rochester did, and as Tommy Moore lives, in the odour of sanctity.

Shelley frequently lamented that it was almost impossible to keep Byron to any one given point. He flew about from subject to subject like a will-o'-the-wisp, touching them with a false fire, without throwing any real or steady light on any. There was something enchanting in his manner, his voice, his smile—a fascination in them ; but on leaving him, I have often marvelled that I gained so little from him worth carrying away ; whilst every word of Shelley's was almost oracular ; his reasoning subtle and profound ; his opinions, whatever they were, sincere and undisguised ; whilst with Byron, such was his love of mystification, it was impossible to know

when he was in earnest. As in the writings of the Greek philosophers, there was always an under-current. He dealt, too, in the gross and indelicate, of which Shelley had an utter abhorrence, and often left him with ill-disguised disgust. At times, however, but they only, like angels' visits, few and far between, he, as was said of Raphael, could pass from the greatest jesting to the greatest seriousness with the most charming grace. To get him into an argument was a very difficult matter. Mr. Hogg, speaking of Shelley, *a* ssys,—“Never was there a more unexceptionable disputant. He was the only arguer I ever knew, who drew every argument from the nature of the thing, and who could never be provoked to descend to personal contentions. He was free from the weaknesses of our nature—conceit, irritability, vanity, and impatience of contradiction.”

“The Eternal Child!” this beautiful expression, so true in its application to Shelley! I borrow from Mr. Gilfillan, and I am tempted to add the rest of his eloquent parallel between Shelley

and Lord Byron, as far as it relates to their external appearance. In the forehead and head of Byron there was a more massive power and breadth : Shelley's had a smooth, arched, spiritual expression ; wrinkles there seemed none on his brow ; it was as if perpetual youth had there dropped its freshness. Byron's eye seemed the focus of pride and lust ; Shelley's was mild, pensive, fixed on you, but seeing through the mist of its own idealism. Defiance curled Byron's nostril, and sensuality steeped his full, large lips ; the lower portions of Shelley's face were frail, feminine, and flexible. Byron's head was turned upwards ; as if, having proudly risen above his contemporaries, he were daring to claim kindred, or to demand a contest with a superior order of beings ; Shelley's was half bent in reverence and humility before some vast vision seen by his eye alone. In the portrait of Byron, taken at the age of nineteen, you see the unnatural age of premature passion. His hair is grey, his dress is youthful, but his face is old.

In Shelley you see the eternal child, none the less because the hair is grey, and that "sorrow seems half his immortality."

No one had a higher opinion of Shelley—of his heart and his head, than Byron; to both these he has done ample credit. I have often been present when the noble poet handed to his friend what he had written during the morning, particularly *Heaven and Earth*, which Shelley read to us when it was copying by Mrs. Shelley, who was occasionally Byron's amanuensis. Shelley was much struck by the choral parts, and repeated twice or three times over as a specimen of great lyrical harmony.

Anah.

Sister, sister! I view them winging
Their bright way through the parted night!

Aholibamah.

The clouds from off their pinions flinging,
As though they bore to-morrow's light.

Anah.

But should our father see the sight?

Aholibamah.

He would but deem it was the moon,
Rising unto some sorcerer's tune,
An hour too soon.

Nor did Shelley admire alone the lyrics of this *Mystery*, and had he lived to see "*The Loves of the Angels*," of which it was the type, would have thought that in its sublimity, its simplicity, and its pathos, it bore the same relation to that meretricious poem, which the *figurante* of the *Pitti* does to the *Venus of the Tribune*.

Cain also had arrived, which Shelley had seen begun at Ravenna; of which, speaking in one of his letters, he says,—“In my opinion it contains finer poetry than has appeared in England since the publication of *The Paradise Regained*; *Cain* is apocalyptic.” It was a frequent subject of conversation between the two poets. Byron read us Hobhouse's opinion,—“that it was worse than the worst bombast of Dryden (sage critic!) and that it was not a work to which he would have ventured to put his name in the days of

Pope, Churchill, and Johnson" (a strange trinity.) I shall reserve what I have to say of this gentleman, an inveterate enemy of Shelley's, to another place.

Shelley was supposed to have greatly influenced Byron in the design of the drama; at least, he was so accused by Hobhouse and Moore; an accusation to which Shelley remarks,—“How happy should I not be to attribute to myself, however indirectly, any participation in that immortal work!” Though he might have had nothing to do with the origination, or the general treatment of the drama,—and indeed, the tone of Cain's language was emphatically Byronic,—I have reason to think that Byron owes to Shelley the platonic idea of the Hades,—the preadamite worlds, and their phantasmal shapes, perhaps suggested by Lucian's *Icaro Menippus*. Lord Byron had certainly a profound respect for Shelley's judgment. I have mentioned being present when the MS. of “*The Deformed Transformed*” was placed in his

hands,—and Shelley's remarks after perusing it,—“that he liked it the least of all his works; that it smelt too strongly of Faust; and besides, that there were two lines in it, word for word from Southey.” On which occasion Byron turned deadly pale, seized the MS., and committed it to the flames, seeming to take a savage delight in seeing it consume. But it was destined to rise again from its ashes. Poets, like mothers, have a strange fondness for their rickety offspring. Byron thought that all his writings were equally good, and always vindicated strenuously those which were the least popular, particularly in the case of the Version from Pulci, which Mr. Moore says “must be fated to be unread;” not that the version itself was bad,—on the contrary, it was most faithful; but the poem was not worth translating, and is totally at variance with the taste of the English public. My notion is, that Lord Byron's object was to shew the inferiority of the original, considered the best of the productions of the Italian

weavers of merry octava rima, to Don Juan, and intended to blind the world to a belief that it was derived from any source but the right one. None of the forty commentators or critics (the number is ominous, certainly a most formidable array of living cavaliers, that have entered the lists against a dead man) being at all aware that the Novelle of Casti were the prototypes of Don Juan,—much less that it was framed and modelled after the *Diavolessa*, and which Byron first read at Brussels in 1816. Leigh Hunt says, “that he is so jealous of being indebted to any one for a hint, that he was disconcerted at the mention I made in the Liberal, of Whistlecraft’s specimen, the precursor of Beppo and Don Juan; and I believe that the praise he bestows on the pseudonymous author, when he asks, ‘who the *devil* can have done this *diabolically* well-written letter?’ is in consequence of the sentiments therein contained, being in accordance with the mystification he wished to keep up.” Leigh Hunt goes on to say,—“that it is utter

humbug to say that it is borrowed from the style of the Italian weavers of merry octava rima." Shelley seems to have been of the same opinion, and during his visits to Ravenna, speaking of Don Juan, says,—“Byron has read to me one of his unpublished cantos of Don Juan, which is astonishingly fine. It sets him not only above, but far above all the poets of the age. Every word is stamped with immortality. I despair of rivalling Lord Byron, and well I may; and there is no other with whom it is worth contending. The canto is in the style, but totally, and sustained with considerable ease and power, like the end of the second canto. There is not a word which the most rigid assertor of the dignity of human nature would desire to be cancelled; it fulfils in a certain measure what I have long preached of producing, something wholly new, and relative to the age, and yet surpassingly beautiful; it may be vanity, but I think I see the traces of my earnest exhortations to him to create something new!”

I now proceed to investigate "the humbug of Byron's having borrowed from the weavers of the octava rima," and to show whether it was "something new."

In the *Diavolessa* of Casti, two Spanish scapegraces scour their native country, dividing its cities among them in search of love adventures; the one is called Don Ignazio, the other Don Juan, but as dramatists and their kind have disposed of the latter personage, to the quieting of all consciences that might dread his prowess, Casti took for his hero Don Ignazio; Byron has taken Don Juan. Casti says of Don Ignazio,—

Naque, e l'infanzia sua passó in Seviglia;

Byron of Don Juan,—

In Seville he was born, a pleasant city.

Casti says of the parentage of Don Ignazio,—

La nobil sua famiglia

Direttamente scendea fin dei ré Goti;

Byron of Don Juan's,—

He traced his source
Through the most gothic gentlemen of Spain.

The Juan and Ignazio of Casti were both precocious, so was the hero of Lord Byron, and the age of twelve was marked as an epoch by both poets.

Entrambo guinti a dodici anni appena.

At twelve he was a fine but quiet boy.

Casti takes his hero out to sea, he is shipwrecked, and considering how little of a sailor an Italian abbé can be, the description of it, though partly drawn from classical authors, will be found most powerful. We certainly do marvel that this probable cause of Byron's Shipwreck has never been suggested, and it is a striking ignorance of the best critics. The sources whence he drew the technicalities of terms have been noticed often enough, but it was never once hinted, that Casti could possibly have suggested the idea. Moreover, in the Shipwreck of the Italian, there is an expression that Byron has evidently copied,

—the *si spezzò*, the going down of the ship, in either case told in two lines ; by the Italian,—

Il quarto di contro uno scoglio urtò,
D'Africa sulle coste, e si spezzò ;

while Byron does it thus :

She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
And going down headforemost—*sunk in short*.

But further, Casti's hero, of all the crew, is the only one saved ; so it is with Byron's ; and more singular still, a dove, or something like one, appears to each in their moments of need.

It was a beautiful white bird,
Web-footed, and not unlike a dove in size
And plumage.

that appeared to Juan and the most beautiful part of the stanza,—

It came and went and fluttered round, &c.

which is, “ e giva e fea ritorno svolazzando,” evidently is a plagiarism from Casti. According to the Italian tale, Don Juan and Don Ignazio

meet in Hell. Byron meant his hero to finish there.

A panoramic view of Hell's in training, &c.

As a general specimen of Casti's style, I subjoin in a note, the Shipwreck;* to which I

* At eventide, nor once the ship they wore,
 They made the mouth of Gibraltar's straits,
 The bound of either continent, where the hoar
 And swoln sea, fettered, ever roars and beats.
 That ocean seems indignant of a shore,
 And oft makes ravage there of all it meets.
 And thus to menace this frail craft with wreck,
 A sudden squall and heavy drove them back.

In haste the mariners, with terror pale,
 In with the deadlights, each a separate door
 To man's destruction,—close-reef every sail.
 Boils the swoln surge, winds rave, and billows roar.
 Fear reigns supreme. There's nothing like a gale
 For taming tiger man. On either shore
 They wildly gaze, and scarce can draw their breath,
 In thinking how they shall escape from death.

Comes mounting on the deck,† like a wild horse,
 With shock that skill and seamanship defies,
 A giant breaker, with the united force
 Of lesser breakers foaming. The spray flies,

† And the waves bound beneath me like a steed
 That knows its rider.

Childe Harold, canto iii., st. 2.

refer those who are curious about this matter,—
to my mind set at rest, as well as the stanza
beginning,—

Ma la grazia di ciel che a lui d'intorno,* &c.

And reflux sweeps the helmsman—and still more
The helm. Ermenigilda ! in thine eyes,
For bridal joys strange terrors then we see.
Poor thing ! the sight of death's but left to thee !

The main-mast gone, and with it the bowsprit,
She wounded lies in a most crazy state,
With water in her hold at least six feet.
To give them hopes, she should at any rate
Have had a helm and binnacle. I repeat,
That none who saw that craft could doubt her fate.
Four days she drove towards Africa, and hit
At last upon a sunken rock, *and split*.

Then all was wreck, and as she thumped the ground,
All were washed overboard, and then a few
Struck by the spars went down ; with bubbling sound,
Others gave up the ghost, till all the crew
Were in the eddying whirlpool sucked, and drowned.
And must the merciless wave thee swallow too,
Ermenigild ?—to save thee was there none ?—
Sole author of these ills, escaped our Don.

* But grace divine, or Heaven's exceeding love,
That oft repulsed, desiring still to stay,
Went and came, like the olive-bearing dove,
Flew round and round, nor would be driven away ;

Werner was also a play written during this winter, and of which Byron produced to myself and Shelley an Act, (the longest, I think the fourth,) the fruit of one mighty morning's labour. The MS. had scarcely an emendation; unlike that of *Heaven and Earth*, which was so interlined as scarcely to be legible. "Werner would be a better acting play," said Shelley, "than a closet one." His words have been confirmed. "It is," says the editor of Byron's works, "the only one of his dramas that has been successful in representation. It is still in possession of the stage."

Shelley used to say, that the magnetism of Byron—"the Byronic Energy," as he called Byron—was hostile to his powers; that, like the reading of Dante, the outpouring of his works,

Did easy access to his bosom prove,

(For trials melt the hardest hearts) that day.

She folds on Don Ignazio, as to rest

Her wings, and seems to light upon his breast.

vast and fair

As perfect worlds at the Creator's will,
produced in him a despair.

In a letter to Horace Smith he says, "I have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has extinguished my glowworm; for I cannot hope with St. John, that the light came into the world and the world knew it not." Certain it is, that when he was with Byron at Geneva, he wrote but little.

I must now speak of his Charles the First. He had designed to write a tragedy on this ungrateful subject as far back as 1818, and had begun it at the end of the following year, when he asked me to obtain for him that well-known pamphlet, which was in my father's library,—
"Killing no murder." He was, however, *in limine* diverted at that time to more attractive subjects, and now resumed his abandoned labours, of which he has left a very unsatisfactory, though valuable Bozzo. The task seemed to him an irksome one. His progress was slow;

one day he expunged what he had written the day before. He occasionally shewed and read to me his MS., which was lined and interlined and interworded, so as to render it almost illegible. The scenes were disconnected, and intended to be interwoven in the tissue of the drama. He did not thus compose the Cenci. He seemed tangled in an inextricable web of difficulties, as to the treatment of his subject; and it was clear that he had formed no definite plan in his own mind, how to connect the links of the complicated yarn of events that led to that frightful catastrophe, or to justify it. There is in the Uffizii gallery, at Florence, an unfinished bust by Michael Angelo, of Brutus, on which is written an epigram, the point of which is, that the great sculptor wisely abstained from the task from disgust at the traitor; might not similar influences have raised an obstacle in the mind of Shelley, to the completion of his unwelcome undertaking? The poet, deeply versed as he was in ancient history, strange to say, as he

owns himself, was imperfectly read in that of his own country. He had no means of procuring, or had failed to procure, necessary books of reference as to the times. If Godwin's History of the Commonwealth, or Carlisle's Cromwell had then appeared, he would have had better data than those supplied by Hume; not that either of the two first authors are perhaps more impartial, or implicitly to be relied on as authorities.

Shelley could not reconcile his mind to the beheading of Charles. He looked upon him as the slave of circumstances, as the purest in morals, the most exemplary of husbands and fathers, —great in misfortune, a martyr in death; and could not help contrasting his character and motives with those of the low-minded, counterfeit patriots, the crafty, canting, bad men, who hatched that murderous conspiracy,—much less could he make a hero of that arch-hypocrite, Cromwell, or forgive him for aiming at the royal sceptre. He was not blind to the energy of

Cromwell's foreign policy, nor insensible to the greatness to which he raised England, but reprobated his unconstitutional use of power, his trampling on all law, by a military despotism more odious than the worst acts of his predecessor. He hated the Puritans,—not their tenets so much as their intolerance. He abominated the atrocities which, on the plea of religion, were perpetrated on the devoted Irish Catholics, and he might have considered as the adder-slime which the Commonwealth spawned, those fit instruments of the vengeance of that sanguinary coward Charles the Second, Scroggs and Guildford, and the still more infamous Jefferys, who sentenced to a death of lingering torture, Algernon Sidney. There was a similarity in the destinies of Shelley and his kinsman; one was condemned on the doubtful evidences of a MS., the other, on that of an unpublished poem, was doomed to have his character blackened, and his children torn from him by the decree of another times-serving judge,

whose biographer should not have forgotten to record this damnatory act among the records of life. It is singular, also, that the two Lord Chancellors should have had one trait in common: they could shed at will "millstone tears."

Shelley meant to have made the last of king's fools, Archy, a more than subordinate among his *dramatis personæ*, as Calderon has done in his *Cisma de L'Ingalaterra*, a fool *sui generis*, who talks in fable, "weaving a world of mirth out of the wreck of all around."

The poet was not so great a republican at heart as Mrs. Shelley makes him out. No one was a truer admirer of our triune constitution. He did not love a democracy, and was in some respects as aristocratic as Byron, and was far from despising the advantages of birth and station; being proud even of his connection, though not by blood, with the Sidneys. It is true that "his hatred of a despotism that looked upon the people as not to be consulted, or protected from want or ignorance, was extreme; and the news of

the Manchester Massacre roused in him violent emotions of indignation and compassion ; and made him long to teach his injured countrymen how to resist ;” which feeling inspired his “Masque of Anarchy,” his “Ode to the Assertors of Liberty,” his “Similies” (for Sidmouth and Castlereagh), his “Lines during the Castle-reagh Administration,” his “Song to the Men of England,” and his “God save the Queen,” meaning Liberty. But it was not over complimentary to the people, his making the swinish multitude in Swellfoot the Tyrant, the Chorus. His ideas had become much modified since he wrote in his boyhood a panegyric on Margaret Nicholson, his notes to Queen Mab, and the Revolt of Islam, where he calls the French revolution, “the last hope of trampled France,” “a brief dream of unremaining glory,” and “a voice of despair ;” and he would not have called Coleridge’s Ode to Switzerland the most perfect of compositions,—the most faultless in spirit and truth in our language,—had he

not entertained latterly, similar opinions with that author on the Revolution, and its "Bacchanals of blood." More than once I have heard Shelley declaim that sublime Ode, to which I have already made allusion.

Shelley used to say, that a republic was the best form of government, with disinterestedness ; abnegation of self, and a Spartan virtue ; but to produce which required the black bread and soup of the Lacedemonians, an equality of fortunes unattainable in the present factitious state of society, and only to be brought about by an agrarian law, and a consequent baptism of blood ; and quoted the sentiment of the amiable Rousseau, that he had rather behold the then state of things, than the shedding a single drop. With which coincidence of sentiment, Shelley used strongly to reprobate Wordsworth's—

Yes, Slaughter
Is God's daughter.

Plato's was a republic of which certainly Shelley could not have approved, for from that, poets were to be excluded. Sir Thomas More's Utopia was, and is a bye-word. He was by no means in love with a republic, from his acquaintance with the Swiss ; and had he lived to see the anarchy and confusion, and intolerance and bloodshed that have desolated many Cantons, he would have still less advocated a renewal of the experiment. And as to America, I remember an observation of his, "that it was easier to form than unform or reform, and that even the United States were too young for us to judge of their duration ; that the President had more power than the head of a constitutional government ought to have ; a power too dangerous,—a wider field for corruption ; and Shelley hated slavery too sincerely in all its forms, not to reprobate the existence of that crying evil, a disgrace to humanity, and the eighteenth century.

Shelley frequently used to inveigh against the political economists ; whose object is to stu

the progress of mankind, and to keep up the *ut possedetis*. He thought that Godwin's answer to Malthus's Essay on Population, was incontrovertible; and that the latter, who from certain hypothetical calculations, which he conceived were confirmed by the returns of North America, drew the conclusion, that "Population, where it is unchecked, goes on doubling itself every twenty-five years, or increases in a geometrical ratio, whilst the means of subsistence, under circumstances the most favourable to human industry, could not possibly increase faster than in an arithmetical ratio," was negatived by the census of all nations; and that instead of every married pair having twelve children, four, or four and a half was the result. The returns of North America being no criterion, owing to the immigration.

I have heard Shelley strongly reprobate an axiom of Malthus, that in a well-regulated state, no one should relieve the necessity of his neighbour. It must be remarked, however, that

Shelley seems to have afterwards taken a more favourable view of Malthus's writings in general, for he says,—“Malthus is a clever man, and the world would be a great gainer, if it would seriously take his lessons into consideration,—if it were capable of attending seriously to anything but mischief. But what on earth does he mean by some of his inferences?” What those are, I need not explain. Cobbett afterwards developed them.

But to return to Charles I. Other causes besides doubt as to the manner of treating the subject, operated to impede its progress. The ever growing fastidiousness of his taste, had, I have often thought, begun to cramp his genius. The opinion of the world too, at times shook his confidence in himself. I have often been shewn the scenes of this tragedy on which he was engaged; like the MSS. of Tasso's *Jerusalemme Liberata*, in the library of Ferrara, his were larded with word on word, till they were scarcely decipherable. I remember a printed copy of his

Revolt of Islam, that was similarly interlined. The Queen Mab in the possession of Mr. Brooks, which I have spoken of, had innumerable *pentimenti*; and when I one day objected to this self-hypercriticism, he replied,—“The source of poetry is native and involuntary, but requires severe labour in its development.”

He sometimes used to say, that he looked to Germany and America for his appreciation after his death, and he judged rightly. Gutzkow, the first dramatic,† and one of the most spiritual writers in the first of these countries, in a treatise entitled, “Gods, Demigods, and Don Quixotes,” places Shelley at the head of this category. Two translations of Shelley’s works have already appeared, and a third is far advanced by the talented Madame de Ploennies, well known from the admirable translations contained in her Britannia. The poets of the new world have taken Shelley as their model, as may be seen by the works of Bryant, Willis, and others. His poems are widely circulated in the Union, and are

† (See p. 100.)

found even in the far West. Would that Shelley had had a prescience of all his posthumous fame! it would have rejoiced his spirit. At times, however, he, like the great object of his admiration, Milton, had a foreboding of his coming greatness, and would quote the prophetic words of our English Mæonides: "This I know, that whether in prosing or in versing, there is something in my writings that shall live for ever."

"Yes." (I quoted, and this is taken from the note of a conversation I had with Shelley,)

That sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled, and mocked with many a loathed rite
Of lust and blood; he went unterrified
Into the gulph of death; but his clear sprite
Yet reigns on earth, the third among the sons of light.

"And Shakspeare, was he well treated by his contemporaries? But he wrote 'for all time'

and not his own. He, too, lives for ever in his land's language."

"And a glorious language it is!" said Shelley.

"What, 'that guttural, sputter-all' language,—you do not mean to compare it with German, or even with Italian?"

"Doubtless," replied Shelley, "there is no medium for poetry superior to our own. Its numerous monosyllables, for which we are indebted to the Saxons, enable us to squeeze into a line more matter than can be included in German, Italian, or French. The Portuguese is perhaps an exception, as you found in the vain attempt of putting the octave stanza of the *Lousiada* into our own. I suspect also," he added, "that it is the most musical of all languages, in spite of what Byron says, and the most sonorous, though it does not admit of so many poetical licences as the Italian, and is poor in rhymes, especially double rhymes,—at least for serious poetry. *Hudibras* and *Don Juan*

prove that for comic there is no want of such. German is indeed a mighty tongue, but harsh and consonantal. German hexameters I cannot, and never could endure. For rendering Greek it is unapproachable, admitting of a coinage of compound words on which we cannot venture,—that would be hostile to the spirit of our language, if carried to excess.”

“That I can hardly admit,” I replied, “when I read your *Prometheus Unbound*. You have there combined and compounded, not two, but frequently more words; and you have fabricated some which I should scarcely hold to be legitimate; for instance, *interpenetrate*.”

“I did not make it,” he rejoined. “It is used by Coleridge—quite authority enough.” “But,” he added, “I can make words, which you cannot.”

There was in this observation a sense of his power—a consciousness of that fame, of which with a prophetic eye he saw the dawn.

There arose out of the conversation to which

I have above referred, on languages, a view of their comparative merits. I quoted Latin as instances of its terseness in rendering Voltaire's epigram—

Qui que to sois, voici ton maître,
Il est, il fut, ou il doit etre.*

Quisquis es en Dominum, Dominus fuit, aut erit, aut est;

and added,—“ You will perceive that the Dominus was, though unnecessary, obliged to be introduced to make the verse.”

Plato's epigram on Aster, which Shelley had applied to Keats, happened to be mentioned,—

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἐλαμπες, ἐνὶ ζῶοισιν Ἑως,
Νυν δὲ θανὼν λαμπρὸς, Ἑσπερὸς ἐν θιμεροῖς,—

and I asked Shelley if he could render it. He took up the pen and improvised:

* It appears that Byron has thus rendered this epigram verbatim,—

Whoever you are your master see,
He is, or was, or ought to be.

Thou wert a morning star among the living,
Ere thy fair light was fled ;
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendour to the dead.

I said, the version was too paraphrastic, and suggested the following :—

Thou wert a morning star to us,
And dying art our Hesperus.

and in Latin, which I have taken as one of the epigraphs of these volumes,—

Tu, vivens, vivis, fers lucem, ut stella diei,
At nunc heu moriens ! Hesperus, Aster eris.

That Shelley should have written but little during the winter, independent of the causes I have assigned, may also be accounted for by his being too much broken in upon and distracted by society, to concentrate his mind on any one subject. His muse admitted of no coquetry—she was *exigeante*, and demanded his whole soul and affections. Solitude and isolation were indispensable to *him*, for the developement of his profound and metaphysical ideas ; but “ *en-*

revanche," he read as wont seven or eight hours a-day. He had received a quarto edition of Lord Bacon's works, which he devoured with avidity, and we read together some parts of Spinoza, of which volume he told an excellent story. On entering Rome, the *Doganieri* laid hands on his books, among which was the very Spinoza, and the Bible. "Which do you suppose, said he, with one of his peculiar laughs, "they confiscated?—the Bible!" We seldom read new works of fiction, but made an exception in favour of *Antar*, which we borrowed from Byron, and found greatly interesting. This Jack-the-Giant-Killer romance, abounds with vivid and picturesque, but overcharged descriptions of the scenery and manners of the tribes of the Desert, and his "Lines from the Arabic" were almost a translation from a translation in that Oriental fiction. *Antar* is a straw that floated for a moment on the stream, and has been engulfed—forgotten. It is an oblivious world. I often asked Shelley if he had never attempted to write like Matthias,

in Italian, and he showed me a sort of serenade which I give as a curiosity,—but proving that he had not made a profound study of the language, which, like Spanish, he had acquired without a grammar,—trusting to his fine ear and memory, rather than to rules.

Buona notte.

Buona notte ! buona notte ! come mai
La notte sia buona senza te.
Non dirmi buona notte,—che tu sai,
La notte sa star buona da per se.

Solingo, scura, cupa, senza speme
La notte, quando Lilla m'abandona,
Pei cuori, chi si batton insieme,
Ogni notte senza dirla, sara buona.

Come male buona notte si suona,
Con sospiri, e parole interrotte,
Il modo di aver la notte buona,
E mai non di dir la buona notte.

To which I made a version that pleased him better, he said, than the one he had himself written, and which I never saw till it appeared

in Mrs. Shelley's edition of his poems. Excuse, reader, my giving my own.

Good night ! good night ! oh say not so—

Where thou art not, can night be good ?

Say not good night—night's good, you know,

Whether we would not, or we would.

Dark, silent, hopeless, drear, and lone,

Night seems when thou withdraw'st thy light.

To hearts, that only beat as one,

There needs no voice to say Good night

Good night's a sound ill understood,

In sighs and murmurs of delight ;

The only way night can be good,

Is never, love, to say Good night.

Shelley had also begun at this time "The Triumph of Life," of which we have a fragment. It advanced very slowly, and in its present form it is impossible to know how he intended to treat the subject ; the lines are of a gorgeous magnificence. Singularly enough, this vision of Shelley's, by a coincidence (for I am convinced it was one, and that he had never read Cardon's

works,) was nearly the same as that eccentric writer's, as may be seen by the following comparative extracts :—

Illuscenti Aurorâ, visus sum toto humano genere,
maximâ que turbâ mulierum, non solum ac virorum,
sed puerorum, atque infantium, juxta radicem montis,
qui mihi a dexterâ erat, currere. Cum admiratione
captus, unum a turbâ interrogarem, quonam omnes
tam precipiti cursu tenderemus. *Ad mortem* respon-
dit.

Thus Shelley :

Methought I sate beside a public way,
Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream
Of people there was hurrying to and fro,
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,

All hastening onward, but none seemed to know
Whither he went, and whence he came, or why
He made one of the multitude, and so

Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky,
One of the million leaves of summer's bier,
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy,

Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear ;
Some flying from the thing they feared, and some
Seeking the object of another's fear,

And others with swift steps towards the tomb
Pored on the trodden worms that crawled beneath,
And others mournfully within the gloom

Of their own shadows walked—and *called it death*.

Hellas, which had been written during the autumn, and sent to England to be printed, I did not see till some months after; but we often discussed the Greek revolution, and he was enthusiastic in his aspirations for her liberty. He would not believe but that the picture drawn by Mr. Hope in his *Anastasius*, of the modern Greeks, was an overcharged one; though he admitted that a long course of political slavery under their Mahomedan masters, had so demoralised and bastardised the nation, that important changes must be undergone before it could be regenerated; but of this he entertained no fears. The opening Chorus of *Hellas* is taken from the “*Principe Costante*” of Calderon, as Shelley pointed out to me; and the drama an imitation of the *Persians* of Æschylus. It is, as Shelley says himself, “full of lyrical poetry,” and I

might add, the most beautiful. The Chorusses are wonderfully imaginative, and melodious in their versification, and splendidly exemplify his peculiarity of style. Whether Byron's "Isles of Greece" suggested the closing Chorus, I know not. The adoption of the same metre might have been a coincidence.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains,
From waves serener far ;

A new Peneus rolls its fountains

Against the morning-star,
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,

Fraught with a later prize,
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.

A new Ulysses bears once more
Calypso, for his native shore.

Another Athens shall arise,

And to remoter time,
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime ;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All Earth can take, or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst more bright and good
Than all who fell—than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued.
Not gold nor blood their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

What is this glorious hymn but another “Isles of Greece?” indeed it yields in nothing to Byron’s strain ; and the prophecy is such as poets love to dwell upon, and Shelley most of all,—the regeneration of mankind, though clouded with the melancholy foreboding of the horrors that the struggle must cost. It is impossible to tell how much this drama, and the enthusiasm of Shelley, influenced the determination of Byron to devote his energies to the sacred cause. If he was to have died young, he could not have died at a better moment for his fame. Nothing, however, in 1821 and the beginning of 1822, was further from my thoughts, than that he would have taken any part in the struggle. He out-anastasiused Anastasius in his view of the Greek character. He used to

say, "that the Greeks were so fallen, that it would be a vain attempt to raise them. One might as well hope to re-animate a corpse." Words that had no sincerity in them, for perhaps at that very time, he had decided in his own mind to join their cause, which, if he thought so desperate and unworthy, he would never have done, nor have embarked in it so large a portion of his fortune; not that he risked indeed the money, for it was raised on the security of the Greek Loan, (friend Hobhouse satisfying him of the validity of the security,) and was in fact repaid before his death. In Byron, were, as I have said, two natures,—the man and the poet were different entities. This incongruity between his poetical sentiments and his prose ones, was very remarkable. In the case of the Greeks, the former prevailed. Shelley used to say that "on this subject, or any other, it was not easy to see his mind through the mists he delighted to throw around it." No one mystified so much,—indeed it was impossible to know when

he was in jest or in earnest. If he mystified Shelley, no wonder that he should often have mystified me in our daily and nightly conversations; though, *singularly enough*, almost every word in them has been repeated in Moore's Life, taken from Byron's Autobiography, pretended to be burnt, and of which autobiography, Washington Irving writing to me, says, "Whilst reading your Conversations, (he, as well as half-a-dozen others, *had* perused them,) I thought, page after page, that I was reading Byron's MSS." But if he mystified me and Shelley, he still more mystified his biographer; as instances of which I shall give three or four proofs out of three or four hundred I could cite. "His lordship told me," Moore says in his preface, "that he meant to leave his will in my hands, and that there would be in it a bequest of ten thousand pounds to Madame G——, (Guiccioli)." (He mentioned this circumstance also to Lady Blessington.) "When the news of his death reached me, I took it for granted that this will

would be found among his sealed papers, he had left me ; but there was no such instrument." Now he had never intended to leave his will with Mr. Moore, nor to make any such bequest, any more than he meant (as he told me) to leave his daughters joint heiresses ; for Ada he disinherited in favour of his sister, and to Allegra he left five thousand pounds, saddled with a proviso, that it should be cancelled if she married a foreigner. The next instance I shall adduce of mystification, is the passage in his journal (alias autobiography,) where he wishes to have it believed that the Corsair and himself were one and the same personage, saying,—“ Who knows what I was doing in the East ?” &c. The third is his mystification respecting his contemporaries, Rogers, Campbell, and Moore, and the high place he allots them in the literary world. As over-politeness is rudeness, so over-flattery is dispraise, and over-disparagement of self, excess of vanity. Shelley was always indignant at the high rank he assigned to Camp-

bell and Rogers ; a rank he has put on record by a diagram or triangular gradus ad Parnassum ; and again in another place, where after Walter Scott, he says, " I should place Rogers next in the list. I value more the man as *the last of the best school*—Moore and Campbell both third," &c. &c. Elsewhere, it is true, when in the quizzing vein, he in speaking of Lord Thurlow, (the best translator by the way of Anacreon we ever had,) says,—

They tell me Phœbus gave his crown,
Some years before his death, to Rogers.

And see the anecdote in the stage coach, about
Lary and Jacky, and

Pretty Miss Jaqueline,
With her nose aquiline.

The same sarcasms he threw out here and there respecting Campbell, an offence which he, one of the *irritabile genus*, could never forgive. He had a high opinion of his own merits, (no wonder) and a few years before

his death, told a friend of mine that he had never read any of Shelley's works. This gentleman, a great Liberal, and an Italian, paid Campbell a visit at his request, and instead of discussing the prospects and hopes of Italy, he could talk of nothing but Pereto's translation of "The Pleasures of Hope;" a work that fell dead from the press, not from the badness of the translation, but because the original was little to the taste of the Italians. But to return to Rogers. In the Conversations of Lord Byron, I have given one between Shelley and Byron, on the subject of Pleasures of *Mummery*, and their author, "The Nestor of Little Poets,"—"The dead Mr. Samuel Rogers;" and where he calls him "a spoiled child, waspish, &c.;" and mentions his suppression of some complimentary lines on his Separation, and which have since appeared; and says that "Rogers was very much offended at its being said that his Pleasures, &c., were to be found shining in green and gold morocco bindings, in

most parlour windows, and on the book-shelves of all young ladies." In that dialogue he throws off the mask, and shows his real opinion of the head and heart of "The Beau, Bard, and Banker;" whose dinners and coteries had begun to fade from his memory by time and distance, and the improbability of his ever again participating in them. In this Conversation are to be found the elements of the Swift-like verses, which he had written, as appears by the date, in 1818,—one of the most stinging and personal little satires ever penned,—and which verses, on the occasion of Rogers' visit to him at Pisa, he placed under the cushion of the sofa where he intended to seat, and did seat him, and during the colloquy, enjoyed the secret pleasure of seeing "The Banker-Bard" repose in unconscious security on his own literary rocket, which Byron well knew would one day explode. I did not lay the match to it, but as this lampoon has already appeared in a magazine of much circulation, and is not contained among Mr. Murray's

edition of Lord Byron's works, I shall here give it entire, premising that Shelley was well acquainted with it.

LORD BYRON'S VERSES ON SAM ROGERS,

In Question and Answer.

Question.

Nose and chin would shame a knocker,
Wrinkles that would puzzle Cocker,
Mouth which marks the envious scorer,
With a scorpion at the corner,
Turning its quick tail to sting you,
In the place that most may wring you.
Eyes of lead-like hue, and gummy,
Carcase picked up from some mummy,
Bowels—but they were forgotten,
Save the liver, and that's rotten,
Skin all sallow, flesh all sodden,
From the Devil would frighten God in.
Is't a corpse set up for show,
Galvanized at times to go?
With the scripture in connection,
New proof of the resurrection.
Vampire! ghost! or goat, what is it?
I would walk ten miles to miss it.

Answer.

Many passengers arrest one,
To demand the same free question.
Shorter my reply, and franker,—
That's the Bard, the Beau, the Banker,
Yet if you should bring about,
Just to turn him inside out,
Satan's self would seem less sooty—
And his present aspect—Beauty.
Mark that (as he masks the bilious
Air, so very supercilious)
Chastened brow, and mock humility,
Almost sickened to servility ;
Hear his tone (which is to talking
That which creeping is to walking,
Now on all fours, now on tiptoe ;)
Hear the tales he lends his lip to ;
Little hints of heavy scandals—
Every friend in turn he handles ;
All which women, or which men do,
Glides forth in an inuendo,
Clothed in odds and ends of humour,
From devices down to dresses,
Woman's frailties—man excesses.
All which life presents of evil,
Make for him a constant revel.
You're his foe for that he fears you,
And in absence blasts and sears you.

You're his friend—for that he hates you,
First caresses and then *baits* you,
Darting on the opportunity
When to do it with impunity ;
You are neither—then he'll flatter
Till he finds some trait for satire ;
Hunts your weak point out, then shows it,
Where it injures to disclose it,
In the mode that's most invidious,
Adding every trait that's hideous—
From the bile, whose blackening river
Rushes through his Stygian liver.

Then he thinks himself a lover—
Why, I really can't discover ;
In his mind, age, face or figure ;
Viper-broth might give him vigour.
Let him keep the cauldron steady,
He the venom has already.
For his faults—he has but *one*,
'Tis but envy when 'tis done—
He but pays the pain he suffers,
Clipping like a pair of snuffers,
Lights which ought to burn the brighter
For this temporary blighter.
He's the cancer of his species,
And will eat himself to pieces—
Plague personified, and famine,
Devil—whose sole delight is damning.

For his merits, would you know 'em—
Once he wrote a pretty poem.

But as a pendant to these verses, there is on record a still racier piece of humour, displayed on the occasion of Rogers' visit to Lord Byron at Pisa, in which he returned the compliment of "he baits you," by baiting him. The anecdote has gone the round of the newspapers, and is too well known to require repetition. Tiger, Byron's bull-dog, plays a great part in it, and the monkey.

So much for his intimate friend No. 1.

I will add to this Swift-like effusion, a string of epigrams, the paternity of which I leave to be guessed.

Εἰς χαρματα τῆς Μνημοσύνης.

*χαρματα μνημοσύνης. μὴ ψευδὴ μου λεγέ, Μούσα,
Ἀλγέα τοῦ μνημῆ, τοῦ μέλος ἀλγος εἶχει.*

In gaudia memorice.

Gaudia! num memor es? dic, mendax Musa, dolores,
Hunc meminisse, librum, me meminisse dolet.

On the Pleasures of Memory.

Pleasures of Memory, say you? pains were better,—
The book were then entitled to the letter.

He to his "pleasures" is a living lie !
Such all will find book, man, and memory.

Come ! no more rhymes,—it is a passing-bell !
The memory of the book itself is Hell.

On some other "Pleasures."

Talking of pleasures, there are those of Hope,—
I want a pendant ! where's the microscope ?

On Rogers' "Italy."

Rogers and Turner ! what is this I see ?
A poet's prose, and painter's poetry.

Three thousand to the painter ! thou didst well
To buy the drawings, for at least they sell.

I hear the children cry, "Dear mamma, look !
Was ever such a pretty picture-book ?"

Rogers's is a new way of illustration !
The drawings are the only inspiration !

'Tis said, Claude gave his figures in—so we
May say of Rogers and his Italy.

What impudence to call it his, we see
The engravings only make the poetry.

Stick to your couplets, Rogers, dear ! for those
Did sell at least ; but who would buy spoilt prose ?

For such a tittle-bat of rhyme,
Sam is the fittest protonyme.

All men but Stoddart would have been perplext
To illustrate so very dull a text.

Cut out the text, and leave the drawings, we
May then admit that this is Italy.

Sure 'twas a pity that they have not been
Divorced, as Lara was from Jacqueline.

I like your book, and shall be less perplext
To tell you why, when you've expunged the text.

Campbell, (who laughed at the idea of Shelley's being a poet, and said of the Prometheus Unbound, "Who would bind it?") Byron Bar-dolphed in "the Erkle's vein," though occasionally he gives him here and there a sly rap on the knuckles. To wit, "read Campbell's Poets, marked errors of Tom the Author," &c., and "Gertrude has no more locality with Pennsylvania than Penmanmaur. It is particularly full of grossly false scenery, as all Americans declare, though they praise parts of the poem," &c; and "the vulgar eye will rest more upon the splendour of

the uniform than the quality of the troops ;” “He has spoiled his best things by over-polish.” Is it a wonder that he should have been spoiled by Byron’s exaggerated praise, and being ranked by him the second of the sons of light ? Campbell, however, in later days, knew well what Byron really thought of him and his works, and after the noble poet’s death, took strong part against him, as proved by Lady Byron’s letter, beginning, “My dear Mr. Campbell,” and the Correspondence ; but Campbell lies in Westminster Abbey, where, doubtless, his rival, Rogers, will have a niche by his side. Where lies Byron ? in some obscure churchyard, the name of which I have forgotten !

No. 3, brings us to Mr. Biographer-general Moore. What Byron’s early opinion of Moore was, may be judged by the “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,” where he says, “Let Moore be lewd ;” since altered to, “Let Moore still sigh,” &c. High rank as he assigns him

in his scale of "Gods," I never heard him quote or mention with praise any one of his poems. Of the Loves of the Angels, he says,—“ I leave others to circumcise these Angels with *their bonnes fortunes*, to the drawing-room and clerical standard.” Leigh Hunt says,—“ Byron had a poor notion of his serious poetry in general. He did not think there was much truth about *that*, either of style or sentiment.” Lord Byron calls Moore “ a tuft-hunter and a smell-feast,” and said,—“ You should have seen how distressed he looked one day at Venice, because the dinner did not suit him ;” an anecdote reminding me of the cloud that came over Moore’s countenance at Versailles, where he dined with Kenney in 1822 or 23. “ Do but give Tom a good dinner and a lord,” observed Byron emphatically, “ and he is at the top of his happiness, for Tommy loves a lord.” Mr. Moore, in his *Life of Byron*, expunges any hits at himself, but rakes together every piece of fulsome compliment he could collect. Aware that Moore

was to be his biographer, he knew well how to mystify him ; in fact, his letters are a tissue of mystification, and Moore keeps it up to the public by sowing his pages thick as the fields of air, with stars ; “ such stars indicating jokes on Rogers, Campbell, Cam Hobhouse, &c.” The affectionate friendship that Moore entertained for Byron, was shewn on the occasion of the parting dinner given to him (Moore,) on the occasion of his quitting Paris, when he refused to reply to Sir Godfrey Webster’s invitation to give his noble friend as a toast, not wishing that any other should that day share in his divinity ; and I have it from good authority, that after Byron’s death, he flitted about London like an antiquated Cupid new fledged, being hardly able to conceal his delight at the idea of the thousands that event would bring into his pocket. His correspondence with Leigh Hunt was a pretty piece of duplicity ; but Hunt was then joint editor of the Examiner ! As Moore sketches the character of several of Lord Byron’s *dead* friends,

especially Shelley, I may be excused for doing the same service to a living one ; and speaking of Shelley, considering the great obligations the biographer was under to Mrs. Shelley, he could not do less than endeavour to modify the opinions to her husband's disparagement, which he was always inculcating to his noble correspondent. Byron's frequent vindication of Shelley from his attacks, shews what they must have been. Moore, however, does not seem to appreciate very highly Shelley's poetry, which he calls "a rich and glittering labyrinth ;" and gives him credit only for "an exuberant fancy," which he says, "was the medium through which he saw all things, his facts as well as his theories ; and that not only the greater part of his poetry, but the political and philosophical speculations in which he indulged, were all distilled through the same over-fining and unrealising alembic."

Having disposed of this kleeblatt (trefoil) of poets, as the Germans say, I take another leaf

out of Byron's and Shelley's books of life, and read there a person named "Hobhouse." I name him thus familiarly, not because I was particularly recommended* to his kind offices by the first of these poets, but because it would make a confusion in styling him now Mr. Hobhouse, and now Sir John Cam Hobhouse. To what services his father owed the title I shall not stop to enquire, but, à la Moore, give a sketch of him for the benefit of some future historian. I am particularly called upon to perform this office for the rejected of Westminster, from knowing that he was Shelley's inveterate enemy, never ceasing to poison Lord Byron's ear against him, and after his death,—proving that the venom-bag had not been quite squeezed dry by writing,—“Why recal the memory of his vices? Who

* The letter above referred to has been lithographed and published. Hobhouse, under one of his *aliases*, calls it a *certificate from a cast-off servant*! This introduction I shewed to a *particular friend* of “the kicked out,” (quere how the charlatan ever got seated?) and who said,—“You don't mean to call on Sancho, do you?” What is left to a man bespattered with mud, but to throw it back? How much more applicable is the name now! does not his government of India forcibly remind us of the Island of Baratoria!

ever heard the tale of his first wife, the beautiful victim of his lust and infidelity, without execrating the author of her sorrows?" Hobhouse deprecates what he calls "trading in the biography of those who are not dead;" but surely it is more manly than accusing one who is no longer able to defend himself, of being an assassin!

Lord Byron and Hobhouse were chums at Harrow, and college friends, and he belonged to the Order of the Scull, founded at Newstead, when, with Parson Andrews, Scroope Davis, Capt. Hay, and "beasts after their kind,"

Wassail nights

Renewed those riotous delights,
Wherewith the children of despair
Lull the lone heart, and banish care.

But he is now a reformed character; he no longer frequents hells, and gets into drunken broils; he has given God the devil's leavings.

He says of Don Juan,—“ We have too much regard for the morality of our readers to quote it, but we refer those who dare venture on the experiment,” &c. &c.

They afterwards travelled together, till they separated from incompatibility of temper, and as travelling companions, none could have been less suited to each other than an imaginative, fiery spirit like Byron's, and a cold, selfish, mathematical unoriginal, like Hobhouse.

It is not wonderful, therefore, "boring" Byron as he did, "with his learned localities, and his pedantry,"* that it was a relief to both when they finally separated in Greece; and, as Byron says, "they were always best apart,"—a strange remark to make of so *dear* a friend. What sort of a travelling companion he was likely to have proved, might have suggested itself to Byron by what occurred between "Hobhouse and Matthews, who were the *greatest friends* possible, and agreed, for a whim, to walk together from Cambridge to town. They quarrelled on the way, and actually walked half the journey, occasionally passing and repassing, without speaking. When Matthews got to Highgate, he had spent

* In another place, Byron says, Forsyth, and *parts* of Hobhouse, are all the truth or sense upon Italy.

all the money he had but three-pence-halfpenny, and determined to spend that, also, in a pint of beer, which he was drinking before a public-house when Hobhouse passed for the last time on the route." Byron again says, "Hobhouse is my best friend, the most lively, most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to boot! He has begun a poem that promises well!—wish he would go on with it! waxed sleepy!" No wonder. Again,—“Hobhouse told me an odd report, that I am the actual Corsair, and that part of my Travels are supposed to be past in piracy. Now, people sometimes hit upon the truth, but never the whole truth. He don't know what I was about the year after he left the Levant, nor does any one,” &c. &c.

Byron says of Hobhouse, another mystification, —that he had an excellent heart, “*fainted* at the report of Byron's death in Greece.” Whereas, what sort of a heart he had, may be judged of by the account Byron gives of “his writing Elegies upon the name of his *dear friend* Long, which was susceptible of a pun, as Long, Short,”

&c. &c. "But," adds Byron, "three years after, he had ample reason to repent it, when our mutual friend, and his particular friend," (whom he now disowns,) "Charles Matthews, was drowned also; but I did not pay him back in puns and epigrams, for I valued Matthews *too much myself* to do so."

Hobhouse, too, would be a poet in his own, and the world's despite, and Byron made many a joke on the volume of poems Hobhouse published at Cambridge, which Byron aptly styled a *Miss-sell-any*—for it fell dead from the press. Whether it was owing to envy or jealousy of Byron, or an innate obtuseness of intellect, his would-be rival was so blind to the merits of *Childe Harold*, that Byron, when enraged at his cant about Cain, told me and Shelley he had shown Hobhouse the MS., and the Hints from Horace,* and that he sily advised him to publish only the last. A singular confirmation of this

* "Get from Hobhouse, and send me a proof of my Hints from Horace. It has now the '*nonum prematur in annum*' complete for its production, being written at Athens in 1811." See Moore's Life.

fact is to be found in the following passage of Moore's Life:—"The MS. of the two cantos of Childe Harold had, previously to their being placed in the hands of Mr. Dallas, been submitted by the noble author to the perusal of some *friend*, the *first* and *only* one, it appears, who had *at that time seen them*." And here I will pause a moment to inquire whether any one who knows the communicativeness of Lord Byron's nature,—his utter inability to keep his own secrets—not to speak of those of others—can for a moment believe that he could have been composing these two Cantos during his travels with Hobhouse, without his having seen them, or at least the greater part of them? Hobhouse denies that he ever, excepting a few fragments, saw them until they were printed. Credat Judæus Abellu* non ego. But even that admission, or Lord Byron spoke falsely, suffices; for Moore, quoting from Dallas, makes Lord Byron say, "They had been read *but by one person*, who

* I suggest this emendation—or rather, perhaps, *Abelli*, (subaudi historiam.) The story of Cain and Abel!

had found very little [to commend, and much to condemn." Hobhouse, by way of another disproof, says, "that he had left Lord Byron before he had finished the two cantos." Whereas an inscription on the MS. has been preserved, and in his lordship's handwriting; viz.:—"Byron, Joannina, in Albania, begun October 31st, 1809; concluded canto II. Smyrna, March 28th, 1810." Hobhouse was with his lordship long after the latter date! Here he did not "lie under a mistake." At all events, I leave it to Hobhouse, who is such a stickler for the noble poet's veracity, to reconcile the discrepancy.

Moore goes on to say, that who this fastidious critic, (evidently alluding to Hobhouse,) was, Mr. Dallas has not mentioned; but the sweeping line of censure in which he conveyed his remarks, was such, as at any period of life, would have disconcerted Byron's judgment. In fact, it did so disconcert his judgment, that had it not been for Mr. Dallas, the world probably never would have seen the *Childe Harold*. "In which case," adds Moore, "it is more than pro-

bable that he would have been lost as a great poet to the world." Might it not have been a knowledge that this secret was in the hands of Mr. Dallas, that induced the *executor* of Lord Byron to prohibit the publication of Lord Byron's Letters in England—(talk of the liberty of the press, indeed! Save the mark, he is a Liberal!) under the hope that a piece of information so fatal to him in his trade of reviewer, would not go forth? Mr. Dallas, however, notwithstanding this crying injustice, suppressed the name of the sage critic,—a stretch of generosity ill merited, but which, if the fact had been so established, that he could not venture to deny it, would have stamped him as one of the most dull, as he is one of the most waspish and foul-mouthed of human beings. What sort of thing the Horatian paraphrase was, we may judge from the specimen Mr. Moore has given of this satire, which would have been, at that time, a death-blow to Lord Byron's reputation, the apparent object of his *dear* friend's advice. The recorded opinion of Hobhouse about Cain

that it was a work Byron would not have written in the days of Pope, Churchill, and Dryden, and his reprobation of Don Juan,* confirm our belief as to the parentage of this the first of his critical brats. But of all satires, the most cutting was Byron's dedication of the fourth canto of Childe Harold to Hobhouse, who had wished to persuade him that the two first were worthless. What Byron *really* thought of Hobhouse's head and heart, that gentleman is so well aware, that the name of Byron is poison to his ears,—wormwood to his lips. Had Moore not asterized, and eunuchized his pages so barbarously, what revelations we should have had of the harmony in which Byron and Hobhouse lived during their travels—of their bickerings and jealousies! Not one reminiscence did Hobhouse supply to the Life of Byron—not one letter; and Mr. Moore thought it necessary to offer his thanks for his own letters, and the per-

* “Your squad are quite wrong about the Juans.” See Moore's Life.

mission to publish them, to this dog-in-the-manger of an executor.

But the subject still holds out attractions. Byron used to say that it was fortunate for men, alluding to Hobhouse, to have undergone imprisonment, (none ever more justly deserved it than this vile libeller,) for it puffed them into a false popularity. Of H——, meaning Hobhouse, Shelley says, "I have a very slight opinion." There is a confidential note of Lord Byron's in existence, a most interesting curiosity, in which his lordship recommended "*certain* folks not to trouble themselves by making vain efforts to appear in the alien character of men of honour." The occasion of this flattering and friendly epistle was the Pasquinade à la Junius,* (Junius never suppressed any thing he wrote,) in which Hobhouse boasted that three hundred Muciuses had sworn to murder Canning. I might give his reply, that complimentary *billet*, in which he calls Hobhouse "a liar and a scoun-

* "Hobhouse is foaming into a reformer," says Byron, in one of his letters. See Moore's Life of Byron.

drel, who only wanted courage to be an assassin." It is a curious document for Hobhouse's future biographers; nor must we omit giving a prominent place to that other pamphlet of his,—his "Hundred Days," in which he strongly urges the making terms with that military despot, and man of unexampled treachery and bad faith, Napoleon. Oh, wonderful statesman! "Fit member,"* as Sacco says of Calcagno, "for an administration."

But if he be a miserable politician, what shall I say of him as an author? No worse specimens of style or taste are to be found than in his works, *passim*. Well might Shelley class him with Eustace and Co., and say, alluding to his Nibbi-stolen notes on the fourth canto of Childe Harold, "the object of which was not to illus-

* The editor of Byron says that the late Lord Kinnaird was received in Paris in 1814, but he had himself presented to Napoleon, and intrigued with that faction, in spite of the Duke's remonstrance, until the restored government ordered him out of the French territory. Quere, whether, friend Hobhouse was one of the intriguers?

trate the poem, but to parade his own learning." They will tell all the show-knowledge about it, (Rome,) the common stuff of the earth!" In his articles, which are numerous, (he has been an indefatigable reviewer, dividing his favours with the most scurrilous ultra-Tory, and the most violent ultra-radical of the periodicals,—*les extremes se touchent*,) he stands quite alone,—shines in unblushing effrontery of assertion and blackguardism of language. In order to serve his purpose, he, at times, condescends to pick up gossip from servants. How much to be depended upon such gossip is, I need not say; but in one instance, I know it to be a gross fabrication. "Hobhouse is known of old as a heavy hand," writes Hazlitt, who knew him well; "he comes down with his ponderous sledge-hammer contradictions, as though he were forging a thunderbolt, and, with all his din and smithery, fuss and fury, only displaces a comma, or corrects a date. The date and the comma are alike unimportant; not so the critic; whatever he does must be great, and while

he thinks the circle around him are astonished at his hard hitting, they only wonder at his want of breath and temper." In a Cheltenham paper of an old date, met the other day with an epitaph for Sir John Cam Hobhouse, Bart.—I now give him his full title. There is more truth in it than such memorials usually contain, and it may serve for his monument in Westminster Abbey, where he will, of course, lie side by side with his friend Campbell.

"Here lies a wrangler, but no orator; a demagogue, but no patriot; a minister, but no statesman; a pedant, but no scholar; a versifier, but no poet; a lampooner, but no satirist. On his escutcheon, where the bloody hand was conspicuous, might be appropriately inscribed,

*Οσμη βροτειων αιματων με προσγελα.**

* Allusive to the fearless speech he made in favour of military flogging. The version of the line is,—“The steam of human gore makes me grin with a foretaste of delight;” or by one of Æschylus’s bold figures,—“grins at me.”

Fortunate it is for Byron that he had Shelley for a friend and fosterer of his genius. How much does not the world owe to the noble poet's emancipation from the fetters of a Hobhouse! —a release from the leaden mantle of his paralyzing dulness!

I might swell out this part of my memorials with very many anecdotes of Shelley and Lord Byron, as contained in *The Conversations*, but as they are well known to the public through Mr. Colburn's numerous editions, I shall not here repeat them. These "Conversations" were taken literally from my journal, and only occupied three weeks in putting together. This unpretending work was pounced upon as a sparrow by a hawk, by Mr. Hobhouse, who thought Lord Byron had descended to him as executor, and deemed it unpardonable that any one but himself should presume to know anything about the noble lord.

On the appearance of Mr. Hobhouse's two articles in *Blackwood* and the *Westminster Re-*

view, which I received abroad, I was so indignant at their infamous and unjustifiable attacks, that my first impulse was to demand of him satisfaction, and had intended going home for that purpose ; but at this moment I fell in with Hazlitt. This happened at Vevay. He told me that, in his opinion, my proposed way of settling literary disputes was a bad one, and requested to see the reviews, and my MS. journal. Having convinced him from the perusal of the latter, that every word in the Conversations had been copied from my daily notes, I next proceeded to show him that Hobhouse's allegations were for the most part so many intentional falsehoods, and, at his advice, wrote a pamphlet, which, when finished, I handed to the great prose writer, who was so kind as to correct it, and add thereto many passages, one of which was,—the style indeed is unmistakable, that beginning, "Hobhouse is known of old as a heavy hand," &c. Hazlitt, I think, took it home with him to Colburn, with instructions immediately to pub-

lish it. That gentleman kept it for several months, and then, at my desire, withdrew it. Hobhouse says I suppressed it. Suppression means something published—and no one understands the sense of the word better than Hobhouse—for he acted thus with his lampoon on Canning. Not only was this pamphlet never published, but never shown, with my consent, to a single individual. One reason for my withholding it from the world was, that although in more than *thirty* instances it contained evidence of malignant and intentional lying on the part of the said Hobhouse, there still remained several mystifications irreconcilable, but with Lord Byron's since-proved habit of drawing the long bow. Another reason was, that I considered it a matter of perfect indifference to me whether aught contained in the *Conversations* was true or false—sufficient for me that it came from Lord Byron himself. Not one tittle have I altered, or ever intend to blot out of “*The Conversations*,”—not even the imaginary duel Lord Byron says

he fought with Hobhouse,—the erroneous detail of the Cecil and Stackpole affair,—Miss Lee's suicide, and some other figments. Whether, also, Murray was justly or unjustly attacked, can be nothing to me. That bibliopole I had never seen, and had not the slightest cause of difference with him, and it is monstrous to suppose that I could be malignant enough to invent these things against him. I had been passing many years in another hemisphere, and knew very little of the literature, and less of the literary men of the day. One blunder I made is certainly ludicrous, and excites a smile at my expense. I allude to the Old Bailey, instead of the, "*Vieux Bailli*." Hobhouse, who is better read in the French and other revolutions than myself, found great delight in exposing this error, but forgot that it furnishes indisputable proof of the authenticity of the Conversations. Hobhouse says, "that there is not a single word or opinion put into the mouth of Lord Byron which had not been printed in some one or other of the pamphlets or prefaces !

—that there is not a single anecdote that has not been for years current among the fashionable and literary gossip of the metropolis! and which the martial author has collated with the proverbial accuracy of a deaf chamber-maid!" What fools the public must have been to put £3000 in Mr. Colburn's pocket for such an "olla podrida!" But if it be *crambe repitita*, what then must Mr. Moore's Life be? Why it must be thrice-laid sour-crout, seeing that ninety-nine out of a hundred of the anecdotes and statements contained in his volumes were first promulgated through me. Enough! I dismiss the subject for ever; only adding, that the Memoir on Shelley, appended to a note in the Conversations, though substantially correct in facts, contains several inaccuracies as to dates, which will be found here emendated.

Several of our countrymen besides the Williams's swelled Shelley's and Byron's circle during the winter. There are some Memoirs published by Colburn, which appeared at this time, said to

be by the pen of Mr. Velvet-cushion Cunningham, a particular friend of Lady Byron, and who doubtless furnished her quota of the matter, in which Byron and this little *coterie* were compared to Frederick the Great, and those wits that took refuge in his Court, viz. Voltaire, the Marquis D'Argent, &c. ; and the object of which coterie, the memoir-writer contends, was to infidelize the world—Shelley being made the Coryphæus. The author was grossly mistaken ; their object was very different. Most of them came to Pisa by accident, and their stay in that city was protracted by the pleasure of Byron's and Shelley's society ; for both were very social, and the noble poet's morning *Conversaziones* and delightful dinners no small attraction. The reverend gentleman, however, one of the forty annotators, inveighs loudly against the Satanic school with “ a forty-parson power.” Nor was he the only one of his brethren who attacked it and them, for a clergyman at Kentish Town treated his congregation with two sermons against Cain,

(that had just appeared,) and there was a third at Pisa who followed in his wake. "Scoundrels of priests," observes Lord Byron, "who do more harm to religion than all the infidels who ever forgot their catechism." But the preaching at Pisa was directed as much or more against Shelley, than his noble friend, and thereby hangs a tale.

In the same house on the Lung' Arno, where Shelley had taken up his abode, lived (well-known by his *Life of Surrey*, most of the materials of which he had surreptitiously obtained by sucking the brains of Bishop Percy, who always expressed himself indignant thereat, for his secretary, from whom I have these particulars, was at that time himself engaged in the undertaking,) Dr. Nott. This divine was, I believe, a Prebend of Winchester, and as his architectural knowledge was profound, the cathedral is much indebted to him for its judicious improvements and restorations. These and other acquirements obtained for him the appoint-

ment of sub-preceptor to the Princess Charlotte, which situation, from his over-anxiety to become (what every prebend and dean of the church invariably does) a bishop, and some coquetting with his royal pupil, whom he persuaded to recommend him by a codicil to her will, for a father-in-Godship, in case of accidents, lost him his office. So at least runs the story, but whether founded on good authority I do not mean to affirm. It might be held sufficient ground to relieve him from his sub-preceptorial duties, that he had published Surrey's amatory verses, which, if not improper in themselves, were rather unfit to place in the hands of the young princess his pupil; so that this expensive edition, that only got into great libraries, and could have had a very limited circulation, proved in all ways an unprofitable speculation to the learned Doctor. He had also been, if he had now ceased to be, "a gay deceiver," and had obtained for himself, by his backing out of more than one matrimonial engagement, the *soubriquet* of Slip-knot (Nott).

“Most unfortunate,” Byron used to say, “was the man who had a name that could be punned upon;” and when he heard of what I am about to detail, said, “that the preacher read some of the commandments affirmatively and not negatively, as Thou “shalt Nott! (not) bear false witness against thy neighbour, &c.” The circumstance to which I allude, and that excited Lord Byron’s bile, is this: He opened a chapel in his own apartment, and preached a trilogy of sermons against Atheism, Mrs. Shelley forming one of the congregation, and his eyes being directed on her with a significant expression, and as his whole flock did not consist of more than fourteen or fifteen, it was evident the Doctor was preaching *at*, and not *to* some of it. These discourses came to Byron’s ears, and though Shelley laughed at the malice of the Doctor, the noble bard was indignant at the prostitution of his pulpit, and still more so when he heard that the divine had at Mrs. Beauclerc’s called Shelley a “*Scelerato*,” which no doubt was deemed very

witty. The day after, Byron wrote a little biting satire, a song to the tune of "The Vicar and Moses," which has appeared in a Periodical, and as it is not to be found in any of his collected works, I shall give as correctly copied by me, by permission of the bard; premising that it was supplied to Colburn for the Conversations, but thought by him *trop fort*. Magazines are like ephemerides, only born to perish. They have the fame of their month, and are forgotten; but nothing from the pen of Byron should be permitted to die. The *nil nisi bonum de moru* is a proverb, with many others, more honoured in the breach than the observance. At all events, I feel no qualm of conscience in branding a reverend lampooner, and deem it an act of justice to the memory of Shelley so to do.

SONG.

(To the tune of the Vicar and Moses.)

Do you know Doctor Nott,
With "a crook in his lot,"
Who several years since tried to dish up

A neat codicil
To the Princess's will,
Which made Doctor Nott not a bishop ?

So the Doctor being found
A little unsound
To his doctrines, at least as a teacher,
And kicked from one stool
As a knave and a fool,
Has mounted another as preacher.

In that gown, like a skin
With *no lion* within,
He still for the bench would be driving,
And roareth away,
A true " Vicar of Bray,
Except that his *bray* lost his *living*,

'Gainst freethinkers, he roars,
You should all shut your doors,
Or be " bound" in the " devil's indentures ;"
And here I agree,
For who ever would be
A guest, where old Simony enters ?

Let the priest who beguiled
His sovereign's child,
To his own dirty views of promotion,
Wear his sheep's clothing still,
Among flocks to his will,
And dishonour the cause of devotion.

The altar and throne
Are in peril alone
From such as himself, who would render
The altar itself
A shop let to pelf,*
And pray God to pay his defender.

But Doctor ! one word,
Which perhaps you have heard,—
They should never throw stones, who have windows
Of glass to be broken,
And by that same token,
As a sinner, *you* can't blame what sin does.

But perhaps you do well—
Your own windows, they tell,
Have long ago suffered effacure,†
Not a fragment remains
Of your character's panes,
Since the Regent refused you a glazier.

Though your visions of lawn
Have all been withdrawn,‡
And you missed your bold stroke for a mitre,
In a little snug way,
You may still preach and pray,
And from bishop, sink into backbiter.

* A misprint in Fraser.—*A step but to pelf.*

† *Effacure* for *erasure*.

‡ *Have been lately withdrawn.*

Disagreeable as it must have been to Mrs. Shelley, to be an inmate of the same house with this licensed libeller, it must be confessed, as I have already stated, that Shelley was but little affected by his preaching; but his hatred and horror of fanaticism shewed itself a short time after, on an occasion that soon occurred to awaken all his sympathies. One day when I called at the bookseller Moloni's, I heard a report that a subject of Lucca had been condemned to be burnt alive for sacrilege. A priest who shortly after entered, confirmed the news, and expressed himself in the following terms:—"Wretch!" said he, "he took the consecrated wafers from the altar, and threw them contemptuously about the church. No tortures can be great enough for such a horrible crime; burning is too light a death. I will go to Lucca, I would go to Spain to see the infidel die at the stake." Such were the *humane* and *charitable* feelings of a follower of Christ. I left him with abhorrence, and betook myself to Lord Byron.

“Is it possible,” said he, with shuddering, “do we live in the nineteenth century? But I can believe anything of the Duchess of Lucca. She was an Infanta—is a bigot, and perhaps an advocate for the Inquisition. But surely she cannot venture in these times to sign a warrant for such an execution! We must endeavour to prevent this *auto da fé*. Lord Guildford is here. We will move heaven and earth to put a stop to it. The Grand Duke of Tuscany will surely appeal against the consummation of such a horrible sacrifice, for he has not signed a death-warrant since he came to the throne.”

At this moment Shelley entered. He had also heard that the offender was to be burnt the next day. He proposed that we should arm ourselves as well as we could, and immediately ride to Lucca, and attempt on the morrow to rescue the prisoner when brought to the stake, and then carry him to the Tuscan frontier, where he would be safe. Mad and hopeless as

the plan was, Lord Byron, carried away by Shelley's enthusiasm, declared himself ready to join in it, should other means fail. We agreed to meet again in the evening, and in the meanwhile to make a representation, signed by all the English at Pisa, to the Grand Duke, then with his Court at Pisa.

Moore in his Life gives the following account of this transaction, contained in a letter to him.

* * * [meaning Taafe,] is gone with his broken head to Lucca, at my desire, to try and save a man from being burnt. The Spanish * * * [Duchess,] that has her petticoats thrown over Lucca, had actually condemned a poor devil to the stake, for stealing a wafer-box out of a church. Shelley and I were up in arms against this piece of piety, and have been disturbing everybody to get the sentence changed. * * * [Taafe] is gone to see what can be done."

“ To Mr. Shelley.

“ December 12th, 1821.

“ My dear Shelley,

“ Enclosed is a note for you from * * * [Taaffe]. His reasons are all very true, I dare say ; and it might, and it may be of personal inconvenience to us. But that does not appear to me to be a reason to allow a being to be burnt, without trying to save him,—to save him by any means ; but *remonstrance* is of course out of the question, but I do not see how a temperate remonstrance can hurt any one. Lord Guildford is the man, if he would undertake it. He knows the Grand Duke personally, and might perhaps prevail on him to interfere. But as he goes to-morrow, you must be quick, or it will be useless. Make any use of my name you please.

“ Yours ever,

“ B———.”

“ To Mr. Moore.

“ I send you the two notes, which will tell you the story I allude to, of the *auto da fé*. Shelley's allusion to “ his fellow serpent,” is a buffoonery of mine. Göthe's Mephistopholes calls the serpent who tempted Eve, “ my aunt, the renowned snake ;” and I always insist that Shelley is nothing but one of her nephews, walking about on the tip of his tail.

“ BYRON.”

“ To Lord Byron.

“ Two o'clock, Tuesday morning.

“ My dear Lord,

“ Although strongly persuaded that the story must be either an entire fabrication, or so gross an exaggeration as to be nearly so ; yet in order to be able to discover the truth beyond all doubt, and to set your mind quite at rest, I have taken the determination to go myself to Lucca this morning. Should it prove less false than I am

convinced it is, I will not fail to exert myself in every way that I can imagine may have any success. Be assured of this.

“Your Lordship’s most truly,

“* * *.” [TAAFE.]

“P.S.—To prevent *bavardage*, I prefer going in person to sending my servant with a letter. It is better for you to mention nothing (except of course to Shelley) of my excursion. The person I visit there is one on whom I can have every dependence in every way, both as to authority and truth.”

“To Lord Byron.

“Thursday morning.

“My dear Lord Byron,

“I hear this morning that the design which certainly had been in contemplation, of burning my “fellow serpent,” has been abandoned, and that he has been condemned to the galleys. Lord Guildford is at Leghorn, and

as your courier, applied to me to know whether he ought to leave your letter for him or not, I have thought it best, since this information, to tell him to take it back.

“ Ever faithfully yours,

“ P. B. SHELLEY.”

The concluding part of this correspondence shews that I was mistaken in saying in the Conversations, that Shelley had applied to Lord Guildford; but the information respecting the culprit's being at that time condemned to the galleys, was (for the course of justice in Italy is not so speedy,) incorrect. The Duchess had issued a proclamation, that the offender, if arrested, should be subject to the Spanish laws; but he had escaped to Florence, and delivered himself up to the police, who had not made him over to the Lucchese authorities, but on condition that he should be tried by the statutes of Tuscany.

I have mentioned Mrs. Beauclerc, a neighbour

of Shelley's family in Sussex, to whom I alluded in the Conversations. She was a daughter of the Duchess of Leinster, by her second marriage, and half-sister to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, whose papers relative to the rebellion, previous to his arrest, were placed in her hands, and I imagine given by her to Moore for his Life of that infatuated and ill-fated patriot. Shelley found a great charm in her acquaintance, for no one, from her intercourse with the great world, and the leading personages of her time, had a more copious fund of anecdote. She was indeed a person of first-rate talents and acquirements, possessed an *esprit de société* quite unique, and her house, which she opened every evening, was a never-failing resource. Byron and Mrs. Beauclerc wished mutually to be acquainted, and I was requested by both to be the medium of introduction, during a ride, in which they were, to save formality, to meet as by accident. Lady Blessington has mentioned Byron's superstition as to days, and I have said that he objected to a

Friday as that of the meeting. But, notwithstanding, it was fated that this introduction should not be attended with any harmonious results. Byron, after it, called, but was not let in. He thought himself slighted, and took her not "being at home" as a mortal affront, and would accept no after-excuses. A correspondence ensued between them, which I applied to her for, but she did not wish to have it published. Her apologies failed to soothe the Poet's *amour propre*, and he was inexorable. On the occasion of her eldest daughter's birth-day, she had invited Professor Rosini, who on the evening of the fête, sent the following lines as an excuse, which that lady deemed a very ambiguous compliment, and referred them to Shelley and Lord Byron, who both thought they could not have been intended as an affront. I give the verses and a translation, premising that no one wrote more elegant *vers de société* than the now well-known author.

A LA SIGNORA B.

Della tua cara Aglaia,
Fia i danzi e i conviti,
Oggi il natal a celebrar m'inviti ;
Bella Emilia errasti,
Si non d'April spirò la tepid'ora,
Delle Grazie il natal non e' venut' ancora.

TO MRS. B.

To greet thy dear Aglaia's natal day,
With festive honours due to it and her,
Emilia! you invite me to your home!
Loveliest of mothers! sure you err!
Till shall have breathed the genial hour of May,
The birthday of the Graces is not come.

Mrs. Beauclerc consoled herself with Mrs. Shelley and Shelley's society, and the grace and ease of his manners and playful converse were the constant themes of her admiration, and she often told me she wished to have seen more of him. In her estimate of Shelley, she agreed with Byron, who says to one of his detractors,—“You do not know how good,

how mild, how tolerant he was in society, and as perfect a gentleman as ever crossed a drawing-room, when he liked, and was liked ;” and in a letter to Moore, he says,—“Shelley, who is another bugbear to you and the world, is to my knowledge the least selfish, and the mildest of men,—a man who has made more sacrifices to his fortune and feelings than any I have ever heard of. With his speculative opinions I have nothing in common, nor desire to have.”

And yet, notwithstanding these private testimonials to his worth, Lord Byron, in some preface or note of his, on which I cannot lay my hand, where he enumerates those friends whom he had met, or made, abroad, does not include Shelley among the number ; and moreover says, that the sooner any other acquaintance whom he has made on the continent should cease, so much the better. I quote from memory, but it is the tenor of his words. How unmanly and unworthy a truckling to Hobhouse, Moore, &c., who did not like to have their names coupled with

Shelley's in the same sentence! what servile deference to the opinion of the world!!

The Counts Gamba and Pietro, the father and brother of the Countess Guiccioli, formed also an addition to Shelley's circle. The former was a plain country gentleman, retired and simple in his manners, and of a melancholy and taciturnity natural to an exile, of his age, from his own country, which none love so ardently as the Italians. The passion of the younger Foscoli for Venice is by no means overcharged. Pietro was, as Lady Blessington says, an amiable man, and was adored by his sister. The last time I saw him was at Genoa, shortly after Shelley's death, whither he had preceded Lord Byron, having been sent out of Tuscany, for some affray with one of the noble lord's retainers; and I may here add that he afterwards accompanied him to Greece, and brought home Byron's remains; on which occasion Mr. Hobhouse stood godfather to a work of his on Byron of little merit, or interest. He was a man of no talent, but pleasing

and agreeable, and carried with him the passport of a very handsome person. There was also at Pisa this winter, a Baron Lutzerode, one of the chamberlains of one of the Princes of Saxe, then on a visit to the Grand Duke. This German baron, to whom it may be remembered Byron gave an impression of a sentimental seal and his autograph, was not unfrequently at Shelley's. He would be a poet, and had written a poem entitled "The Swan Song of the Priest-Murderer," which he wished Shelley much to translate, and which, with his good nature and love of obliging, he one day did attempt, but found the task not to be accomplished. Shelley used to laugh heartily at the strange title.

During the carnival, we took, in conjunction with Lord Byron, a box at the opera, but he never frequented it, nor the Countess Guiccioli, who devoted herself to consoling her father. Shelley sometimes assisted at the representation, for he was very partial to music. Sinclair, the celebrated tenor, had an engagement, and elec-

trified the house in the duo (I forget the name of the opera) of—

Cio che tu brami, Io bramo,
Non aviam che un' cuore.

But his pronunciation was bad, and his acting, like Braham's, very indifferent, as is the case with many singers. His voice possessed a wonderful sweetness and melody, though not much compass, but in a private room, where we sometimes heard him at Mrs. Beauclerc's, he was delightful. He was able to appreciate, and used to speak in raptures of Shelley's Lyrics, and thought them highly adapted to be set to music, and was desirous of doing so; but whether he carried his design into execution, I know not.* Mrs. Williams, who was an accomplished singer, and player on the harp, guitar, and piano, greatly added to the charm of our *soirées*, sometimes varied by "*bout-rimés*." On one occasion, I remember a remarkable instance of Shelley's facility and exercise of ima-

* At Fox's chapel, in Finsbury, I heard two of Shelley's sublime effusions in praise of Liberty, Virtue, and Love, sung, as set to hymns. *Tempora mutantur.*

gination. A word was chosen, and all the rhymes to it in the language, and they were very numerous, set down, without regard to their corresponding meanings, and in a few minutes he filled in the blanks with a beautifully fanciful poem, which, probably, no one preserved, though now I should highly prize such a relic !

I passed much of my time in Shelley's domestic circle, dining with him most days. He was, as I have said, most abstemious in his diet, —utterly indifferent to the luxuries of the table, and, although he had been obliged for his health to discontinue his Pythagorean system, he still almost lived on bread, fruit, and vegetables. Wine, like Hazlitt, he never touched with his lips ; Hazlitt had abandoned it from a vow, having once injured his constitution by excess ; but as to Shelley, it would have been too exciting for his brain. He was essentially a water-drinker, and his choice of Pisa, and his continuance there, had been, and were directed, as I have said, by its purity,—the stream being brought from the mountains many miles distant, by the pic-

turesque aqueduct that crosses the plain from above the Baths of St. Julian. Shelley was a man of the nicest habits,—the most scrupulous nicety in his person ; invariably, whatever might be his occupation, making his toilette for dinner, during the interval between which he wrote his letters on his knees. His correspondents, as may be seen by the second volume of his Prose Works, were not numerous. His pen flowed on with extraordinary rapidity on these occasions, and without a moment's pause, his mind was mirrored on the paper—and beautiful, indeed, was his epistolary style, nor less bold and beautiful his hand-writing, which is said by some to be a distinguishing mark of character. His hand was very early formed, and never altered,—as will appear by the autograph of a letter written when he was ten years of age, contained in appendix to Vol. I. His letters, unlike Byron's, were the expression of his soul in all its sincerity. At other times, he would read what Mrs. Shelley had been writing during the

day, in whose progress he took great delight and interest, now and then altering in pencil a word. She was then engaged in her novel of *Castruccio*, afterwards called *Valpurga*, a title substituted for the first by Godwin, for whose benefit it was designed, and produced, it appears, £400,—at least that sum had been offered by Ollier, Shelley's publisher. That was "the Golden age" of novelists; but *Valpurga* was a talented work, full of eloquence and beauty and poetry, lost on the world of readers of fiction, as a favourite dramatist told me good writing was for the stage, and as much militating against its success with the public.

During dinner, he almost invariably had a book by his side. In respect of the table, he differed from Byron, who was in his heart a *bon vivant*, and only mortified his palate from a fear of getting fat, in which he ultimately succeeded to his heart's desire, for, at Genoa, he had become skeletonly thin, as may be seen by a *silhouette* of Mrs. Hunt's, and Lady Blessington's description

of his person, which she compares to that of an overgrown schoolboy. Occasionally Mrs. Shelley used to read with the Grand Duchess, and, some years afterwards, at the Court of Florence, the duchess spoke of her to me in the kindest terms, and of Shelley, with whose writings she seemed familiar, and said she thought him unjustly calumniated, for he had left behind him at Pisa the memory of his virtues and benevolence. To Byron the duchess made no allusion. She remembered the affair of Sergeant-major Masi. But speaking of dinners, I must not forget to mention those of Byron, and which, though Shelley did no justice to their good fare, he enjoyed as much as any of the party. At one of these repasts, or rather before dinner, as we were sitting in his studio, the conversation happening to turn on longevity, Byron offered Shelley a bet of £1000 on that of Lady Noel against Sir Timothy Shelley's, and which wager Shelley at once accepted. Not many weeks had elapsed, when her ladyship died, and we all thought that

Byron would have paid the debt, or at least have offered to pay it—but he neither did one nor the other. It is my decided opinion that Shelley would have refused to receive the money, but it ought to have been proffered; and I have little doubt that had the baronet died the first, Shelley would have acted differently. That Byron would have taken the sum of course no one can say. Williams (who with two other English gentlemen, was present,) was highly indignant at, and disgusted with Lord Byron, and never afterwards entered his doors,—a circumstance Byron lamented to me, for he knew him to be a highly honourable and gentlemanly man; saying, “he could not conceive the reason of his avoiding him!” I mentioned in my memoir of Shelley, which appeared in the Athenæum, the circumstance of this bet, and an anonymous writer questioned it by saying, that it was recorded in Moore’s Life that Lord Byron *did* pay a bet to Captain Hay of £50. Had a similar wager been laid with, and lost to the same gen-

tleman, there is no question what the result would have been,—Lord Byron would have acted as he did in 18—. This “Constant Reader,” as he calls himself, accuses me of garbling—me of all people! as if the charge laid at my door had not been of saying too much, rather than too little. The new accusation came strangely enough (it did come *through* Mr. Moore,) from a friend of Mr. Moore, who, if he had ever opened a page of that said Life of Byron, must have perceived at a glance that scarce an epistolary, or other scrap contained in it is there given in an ungarbled and unmutilated state. Lord Byron says, in another of his letters, “that he had rather Moore edited him than any other person;” but does his unknown friend really think, that if Lord Byron had dreamed of the possibility of his being *Deiphobized*—of undergoing the cruel operation he has in Mr. Moore’s hands, that he would have continued to correspond with Mr. Moore; or that if the autobiography was destined to be made an *auto da fé*

(though it was first carefully copied by the particular and recorded injunctions of Lord Byron,) it would have been presented to him at all? Can Mr. Moore fancy that Lord Byron, who was not only reckless of his own reputation—of what the world thought of him—but equally regardless of what he thought of others, that he, whose favourite dogma was “Everybody hates everybody;” who, through a spirit of mischief-making, wished to convert friends into foes by his indiscreet revelations—cared about the curtain being withdrawn, so as to give them and the public a peep behind the scenes? No! Byron delighted in the idea, that these memoirs, written expressly for publication after his death, would make the world stare, and set everybody by the ears. When Mr. Moore accepted the *precious* present, the Autobiography, he virtually bound himself to its appearance, nor ought the influence of any person to have induced him to suppress (in this instance suppression was equal to destruction,) the sacred deposit. I shall not stop to inquire what equivalent (report says two

thousand pounds,) he received for this act of squeamishness.

What figure would the Conversations of Dr. Johnson cut at the present day, had Boswell been as scrupulous as Mr. Moore? how emasculated would such hacking and maiming have rendered them! Such, to the generality of readers, to all but the initiated; must this Life of Byron appear—what will it be some years hence? It will defy a Croker. Certain it is, that were Lord Byron to rise up again, he would be at a loss to recognise his style or sentiments in this *olla podrida*, never surely would it have entered into his contemplations, that his friend Moore would have drawn a chaste pen through expressions *un peu trop forts*; but should such a thought have entered his brain, he would have burst into one of his sardonic grins, and have drawled out the quotation applied by Southey to some one, in some number of the Quarterly,—

Fall to your prayers, dear Tom!

How ill, &c.

It is vain to attempt to conceal, or whitewash Lord Byron's opinions of men or things in general. Every coming day will let us more into the mysteries of Eleusis. Mr. Moore reminds us of the painter, who in a portrait of Cardinal Wolsey, drew him in profile, that his blind eye might not be seen.

But of what nature were the Confessions in that sacrificed Autobiography? It could not have been so highly objectionable in matter, or manner, for it was seen by Shelley, Washington Irving, Douglas Kinnaird, Sir Godfrey Webster, and more than all, by Lady Burghersh, now Lady Westmoreland, and probably by a dozen others; and hence the presumption is, that the letters themselves, which have given rise to this episode, were not so very strong or very bad as Mr. Moore's innumerable asterisks lead the reader to suppose, whose imagination is now left to run riot to an indefinite extent, by knowing that the writer was Byron, and that they were penned to the author of *Little's Poems*.

I take my leave of the "Constant Reader," by telling him, that I have just discovered that his friend the biographer, by a strange *lapsus calami plumæ*, after the translated paper headed "Göthe and Byron," leaves the reader more than doubtful, whether it was not addressed to Lord Byron himself. That communication was made to me in German, in 1825, and I possess the precious original in the autograph of Göthe himself; who has done me the honour to mention me several times in his works. This letter must have found its way into Mr. Moore's pages, from his having consulted a *certain appendix*, in order to strengthen a diluted volume with one of the most valuable things in mine, a specimen of petty larceny in literature one would imagine so exercised a writer would have been deterred from, under the apprehension of the *lex talionis*.

I am at a loss to account for the inveteracy with which I was assailed by the press, through the influence of the all-mighty bibliopolist, and

of the persevering attempts that were for a time but too successfully exerted, to cast doubts on the authenticity of Byron's Conversations. Much credit is due to the publisher, for this very ingenious, and to him useful policy. The fact is, that Messrs. Moore, Murray, and Hobhouse, looked upon Lord Byron as their heirloom, his remains as their private property, and were highly indignant that any one else should presume to know anything about their noble friend. Considering how fond Byron was of mystifying, it is most singular, that almost every anecdote contained in my unassuming sketch, should have been subsequently confirmed by his letters or journals. These conversations were, as may be seen by any one who has the curiosity to examine the MSS., taken down day by day, and only cost three weeks in transcribing. The subjects he discussed were mostly new to me, who had passed some years abroad. The persons of whom he spoke, totally unknown to me ; and it is monstrous to

suppose that I could have invented of Murray and others, the strange things therein contained. Byron could not have been, however, on the good terms with his publisher, that gentleman wished to make out, when the poet could give me, on leaving Pisa, a memorandum to read to Mr. Murray's head clerk, (and which I did read in his shop,) couched in no very friendly or measured terms. The circumstance of such a memorandum being given unopened, proves, at all events, no great delicacy on the part of his noble patron, on whom he soon after revenged himself by circulating about town, in a lithographic autograph, a passage from one of his letters, beginning, "I must pay for the——by the sweat of my brow, &c., &c." Hobhouse says that Byron's language was as choice as his words were few. Such perhaps this letter appeared to Mr. Hobhouse. Enough!

But Byron's mystifications were not confined to his contemporaries. I have a note of a conversation which escaped me, with him and Shelley on

Dante. When it suited Byron's purpose in defence of his *Prophecy of Dante*, (see Moore's *Life*, p. 123,) he could talk a very different language ; though the expression of the opinions here orally detailed, correspond with the sentiments contained in a note to *Don Juan*.

"The Divine Comedy," said he, "is a scientific treatise of some theological student, one moment treating of angels, and the next of demons, far the most interesting personages in his Drama ; shewing that he had a better conception of Hell than Heaven ; in fact, the *Inferno* is the only one of the trilogy that is read. It is true," he added, "it might have pleased his contemporaries, and been sung about the streets, as were the poems of Homer ; but at the present day, either human nature is very much changed, or the poem is so obscure, tiresome, and insupportable, that no one can read it for half-an-hour together without yawning, and going to sleep over it like *Malagigi* ; and the hundred times I have made the attempt to read

it, I have lost my labour. If we except the ‘Pecchie chi uscino del chiuso,’—the simile, ‘Come d’autunno si levano le foglie,’—the Francesca di Rimini, the words, ‘Colore oscuro,’ &c., inscribed on the portal of Hell,—the Death of Ugolino—the ‘Si volge al’ aqua,’ &c., and a dozen other passages, what is the rest of this very comic Divine Comedy? ‘A great poem! you call it;’ a great poem indeed! *That* should have a uniformity of design, a combination of facts, all contributing to the development of the whole. The action should go on increasing in beauty and power and interest.

Has the Divina Comedia any of these characteristics? Who can read with patience, fourteen thousand lines, made up of prayers, dialogues, and questions, without sticking fast in the bogs and quicksands, and losing his way in the thousand turns and windings of the inextricable labyrinths of his three-times-nine circles? and of these fourteen thousand lines, more than two-thirds are, by the confession of Fregoni, Algarotti, and Beettinelli, defective and bad; and yet, despit

of this, the Italians carry their pedantry and national pride to such a length, as to set up Dante as the standard of perfection, to consider Dante as made for all time ; and think, as Leigh Hunt and the Cockneys do of Shakspeare, that the language came to a stand-still with the god of their idolatry, and want to go back to him."

That Shelley did not agree with Lord Byron in this criticism, I need scarcely observe. He admitted, however, as already recorded, that the Divine Comedy was a misty and extravagant fiction, and redeemed only by its "Fortunate Isles, laden with golden fruit." "But," said he, "remember the time in which he wrote. He was a giant.

Quel signor del' altissimo canto,
Chi sovrea gli altri come aquila vola.

Read the Paradiso, and parts of the Purgatorio, especially the meeting with Matilda."

He afterwards told me that the more he read Dante, he the more admired him.

He says in his Letters. p. 225, that he excelled all poets, except Shakspeare, in tenderness, sublimity, and ideal beauty. In his Defence of Poetry, Shelley calls the Apotheosis of Beatrice in the Paradiso, and the gradations of his own love and her loveliness, by which, as by steps, he figures himself to have ascended to the throne of the Supreme Cause, as the most glowing images of modern poetry; calls the Paradiso a perfect hymn of everlasting love, and the poetry of Dante the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. Nay, more, he admired Dante as the first reformer, and classes him with Luther, calling him the first awakener of Europe, and the creator of a language in itself music.

It was during the latter part of my stay at Pisa, that Byron formed his design of building a yacht. Shelley, whom he consulted in all his private affairs, settled the price of the vessel, to be built under the superintendence of the naval architect of the *Darsena* at

Genoa. His own passion for boating, already strong enough, was doubly excited by this idea of Byron's. Williams contributed also to foster the passion, and being acquainted with Captain Roberts, (the son of the celebrated Roberts, who commanded one of Capt. Cook's ships in his voyage round the world,) corresponded with him on the subject, and the consequence was, that a schooner, but on a much smaller scale, was ordered. The shape of the boat, modelled after one of the man-of-war boats in the dock-yard, with some variations in the build, was at length approved of. Her dimensions were to be twenty-four feet long, eight broad, and drawing four feet of water. She was a beautiful craft on paper, but to my mind far from safe, for her ballast, two tons of lead, was to be let into her keel. Any one acquainted with boating, must know that the only good ballast is live ballast, as it is called,—water casks, that can be shifted starboard or larboard, according to the reeling of the vessel, and which,

in cases of emergency, can be thrown overboard to lighten her; a ballast indeed that scarcely requires this, for it will float. I need not enlarge on this topic, but how far my criticism was justified by the event, will soon appear.

After a parting dinner given me by Byron, I took leave of my friends, with a promise of seeing them in the summer. Williams seemed to me in a rapid decline, but Shelley's health was wonderfully improved, and he exhibited no symptoms of any disease that caused apprehension. His spirits, too, were comparatively good, and he was looking forward—*that* gave a stimulus to them—to the arrival of Leigh Hunt, of whom he frequently spoke with the warmest regard, and often took a delight in looking at a portrait of him, which he had received during my first visit.

A few days from my arrival at Rome, on the 20th March, there had occurred a circumstance at Pisa, which caused a great sensation among the English,—ever ready and willing to believe

anything *against* Lord Byron,—owing to a misstatement of the facts in the *Courier Français*, and several other papers, among the rest *Galig-nani's Messenger*, in which it was stated, that in a quarrel between Lord Byron and an officer of dragoons, a servant of Lord Byron's had stabbed him, and that he had died of his wounds. This story, though I did not credit it, greatly annoyed me, and I immediately wrote to Lord Byron for the particulars, in order that I might contradict it from authority; in answer to which he sent me by return of post the affidavits of Shelley and the rest of the party present, who it seems had been grossly insulted, not by an officer, but one Sergeant-major Masi, who, though they were unarmed, struck some of them with his sabre, especially Shelley, who received a cut on his head that felled him from his horse. According to another affidavit of Mr. Crawford, “as they were all riding together after this rencontre, on the Lung' Arno, where a crowd was collected, high words passing between Lord

Byron and the Sergeant-major, who was about to cut him down with his sword, Lord Byron's servants, who were waiting for their master at the door of the Lanfranchi palace, dragged the aggressor off his horse into the hall, and then one of them slightly wounded him with a pitchfork." Mr. Moore seems to have suppressed Lord Byron's letters on this subject, on which he could not have failed to have written. The tranquillity at Pisa, owing to this unlucky squabble, had been much disturbed, not only by anxiety about the life of the sergeant-major, but by the many sinister reports and suspicions, however ill-founded, to which that affair gave rise. Although the wounded man recovered, his friends vowed vengeance with the dagger, not only on Lord Byron, but on Shelley, and all the English who had formed the cavalcade. The judicial enquiry too was most annoying; all Lord Byron's servants, except the coachman, were arrested, but no evidence being adduced against them, they were released.

Lord Byron was advised by the police to quit Pisa for a time. He complied, and took a villa at Monte Nero, near Leghorn; but after a six weeks abode there returned to the Casa Lanfranchi.

Lord Byron, naturally kind and benevolent, treated his domestics less like menials than equals, and hence the zeal, which, after the manner of the Italian retainers of old, often, as on this occasion, overstepped the bounds of devotion, they displayed. The Tuscan police are not very remarkable for clear-sightedness, and overlooked the right culprit. Some years afterwards, when I was at Sienna, a mendicant with a wooden leg, who was begging his way to Rome, his native city, called on me for alms, and when I had given him a trifle, said,—“Do you not remember me? I was Lord Byron’s coachman at Pisa, and used to drive you and Signor Shelley every day to the Contadino’s.”

The man was so much changed, that it was

some time before I could recognise his features ; but at length did so, and after some conversation, he confessed with all the pride of a Guelph or Ghibilline, that he had avenged his master's insult.

A few months after, I related to the Countess Guiccioli, at Florence, this anecdote, and she told me that a man answering my description had also called on her, but that she thought him an impostor. He, however, told me so many things which could only be known by an individual in Lord Byron's service, that I entertain no doubt of his identity. He spoke of Shelley's being at Ravenna before his lord's departure, of the fondness of little Allegra for Shelley, her being sent to the convent at Ravenna, and I know not what besides, respecting his master's Franciscas and Katinkas, who have been immortalised in the page of Moore, and with their portraits so splendidly engraved, will go down to posterity with the Fornarina.

But to return to Shelley.—He, after my de-

parture from Pisa, had employed himself in translating some scenes of Faust, being led thereto by Retchs's Outlines, of which he says,—
“What etchings! I am never satisfied with looking at them, and I fear it is the only sort of translation of which Faust is susceptible. I never perfectly understood the Hartz mountain scene until I saw the etching; and then Margaret in the summer house with Faust! The artist makes me envy his happiness, that he can sketch such things with calmness, which I only dare look upon once, and which made my brain swim round, only to touch the leaf on the opposite side of which I knew it was figured. Whether it be that the artist has surpassed Faust, or that the pencil surpasses language in some subjects, I know not; or that I am more affected by a visible image, but the etching certainly excited me far more than the poem it illustrated. “Do you remember,” he adds, “the 54th Letter of the first part of *La Nouvelle Heloise*? Göthe in a subsequent scene undoubtedly had that let-

ter in his mind, and this etching is an idealism of it. So much for the world of shadows !”

Shelley also found, as already mentioned in “The Conversations,” (for what Byron said there was derived from him,) a striking resemblance between Faust and Cypriano, and says in one of his letters,—“If I were to acknowledge Coleridge’s distinction, I should say Göthe was the greater philosopher, and Calderon the greater poet. Cyprian evidently furnished the germ of Faust, as Faust may furnish the germ of other poems, although it is as different from it in the structure as the acorn is from the oak. I have, imagine my presumption,” (the letter is dated April 10, 1822,) “translated several scenes from both, as the basis of a paper for our journal. I am,” he adds, “well content with those from Calderon, which, in fact, gave me but little trouble, but those from Faust I feel how imperfect a representation, even with all the licence I assume, to figure to myself, how Göthe would have written in English, my words convey. No one but Coleridge is capable of the work.”

These scenes of Shelley's, which were originally destined for the new publication, afterwards appeared in the *Liberal*. The translation has been unmercifully handled by Mr. Hayward. Of our gifted poet's "Prologue in Heaven," Mr. Hayward says, "it has no great merits, and some mistakes." Had he compared, unblinded by prejudice, his own bald and bare version, a sacrilege to the memory of Göthe, of—

Es wechselt Paradiese helle
Mit teifer schauervoller nacht,—

1 in 16
1 in

with Shelley's poetical one,—

Alternating Elysian brightness,
With deep and dreadful night,—

he would have seen that Shelley really did understand and feel the beauty of the passage.

"Adornment" also for *Pracht* is quite as good as "pomp," though neither express its full meaning, and Mr. Hayward is very partial to himself when he thinks his own "deep base of the rocks"

better than Shelley's—"The sea foams in broad waves from its deep bottom."

For my part, I cannot consider Shelley so "monstrous a malefactor" as Mr. Hayward calls him; and one thing is certain, that the adoption of our great poet's words—aye, sometimes of whole lines,—has infused into Mr. Hayward's "Prolog in Himmel," and Scene in the Hartz Mountains, a spirit vainly looked for elsewhere.

Those who think "My Cousin the Snake" better than "My Old Paramour the Snake," are at liberty to adopt Mr. Hayward's literal reading, in which he so much prides himself,—and his vanity is egregious. But in rendering Æschylus's *κασις πηλου κονις*, who would spoil a fine passage by translating it, "Dust, Sister of Mud?" The four lines beginning *Das Werdende*, are perhaps among the most difficult in the drama; but *Das Werdende* is not as Mr. Hayward gives it,—"The Creative Essence." *Das Werdende* is "that which commences to exist—

that which the actual moment produces." Shelley's—

“ Let that which ever operates and lives,
Clasp you within the limits of its love,
And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts,
The floating phantoms of its loveliness,”

is to my mind satisfactory. Mr. Hayward had many coadjutors in his task, Shelley none; but surely his high authorities never could have agreed in making Margaret say,—“ she gave her little sister suck,” or have been satisfied with such expressions as these in a chorus of angels: “ Joy to the mortal, whom the perishable, *sneaking*, hereditary imperfections enveloped;” or, “ thou hast destroyed it, this beautiful world, with thy strong *fist* !” It is no unfair retaliation on Mr. Hayward thus to criticise his labours.

Notwithstanding his captious objections, Shelley's translations are of the highest order,—so high, that all must regret they were so few. He alone of all men that the present age has produced, was fitted to take up Göthe's mantle.

But the best proof of the excellency of Shelley's version, is, that Göthe himself expressed his entire approbation of these scenes of Shelley's.

The rock on which all have split who have attempted to render Faust, has been an over-scrupulous regard to metrical arrangement, which he, with his exquisite taste, avoided. Others do not seem to have been aware that the genius of German and English poetry is so widely different, that what produces a magical effect in the metre of one language, appears namby-pamby and puerile in the other. Milton made the experiment in Horace's Ode to Phryra,—failed, and never made a second attempt. Bulwer tried to render Schiller line by line, which has given not only a stiffness to his version, but renders much of it obscure, not to say unintelligible. In his "Ideale and das Leben," I was at a loss to find the original. But I have been led too far out of my way. Shelley needs no justification. Faust yet remains to be translated; but who would venture to put anything he could produce

in competition with Shelley's Hartz Mountain scene. "There is no greater mistake than to suppose,"—I use Shelley's own words,—“that the knowledge of a language is all that is required in a translator. He must be a poet, and as great a one as his original, in order to do justice to him.” Hence the wretched plaister casts of Faust, more especially Anster's, so bepuffed into celebrity by Blackwood.

Shelley's translation from Calderon is equally a masterpiece, rendering the force and colour of the first part of the “*Magico Prodigioso*,” with surpassing truth. There must have been something “rotten” indeed in the Liberal, not to be saved by these Versions, and the Vision of Judgment.

Previous to Lord Byron's temporary migration to Leghorn, Shelley had broken up his establishment at Pisa, and on the 28th April, writes to Mrs. Shelley, then at Spezzia, with the Williams's :—

“I am at this moment,” he says, “arrived at

Lerici, where I am necessarily detained, waiting the furniture, which left Pisa last night. It would not do to leave affairs here in an *impiccio*, great as is my anxiety to see you. How are you, my best love? how have you sustained the trials of the journey? Answer me this question, and how my little babe and C——— are?"

After overcoming the difficulties of the Dogana, they took the Casa Magni, near Sarzana, of which I shall hereafter give a description. On the 12th May, Williams, in a journal that is very interesting, records the arrival of the long-expected boat. "While walking with the harbour-master of Lerici on the terrace," he says, "we descried a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venese, which proved at length to be Shelley's boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday, but had been driven back by the prevailing head winds; a Mr. Hislop, and two English seamen brought her round, and speak most highly of her performance. She does indeed excite my surprise and admiration. She

fetches whatever she looks at. Shelley and I made a stretch off the land to try her. In short, we have now," he concludes, "a perfect plaything for the summer."

On June 12th, Williams says in the same journal,—“Saw a vessel between the straits of Porto Venese, like a man-of-war-brig; she proved to be the Bolivar, (Lord Byron's yacht.) Sailed to try the vessels. In speed, no chance with her; but I think we keep our wind as well. This is the most beautiful craft I ever saw for the size.”

“Thursday, June 20th.

“Shelley hears from Hunt, that he is arrived at Genoa, having sailed from England on the 13th May.” I have said that I shall not enter into any remarks on Mr. L. Hunt's grievances. Shelley seems to have foreseen that the periodical would fail. “Between ourselves,” he says to C. T., “I greatly fear that this alliance will not succeed, for I who have never been regarded as more than a link of the two

thunderbolts, cannot now consent to be even that ; and how long the alliance may continue, I will not prophecy. Pray do not hint my doubts on the subject to any one, or they may do harm to Hunt, and they may be groundless."

"Shelley," says Mrs. Shelley in one of her notes, "was eager to see him. I was confined to my room with severe illness, and could not move. It was agreed, that Shelley and Williams should go to Leghorn in the boat. Strange that no fear of danger crossed our minds. Living on the sea-shore, the ocean became a plaything ; as a child may play with a lighted stick, till a spark enflames a forest, and spreads destruction over all, so did we fearlessly and blindly tamper with danger, and make a game of the dangers of the ocean ;" and adds, "that the running down the line of coast to Leghorn, gave no more notion of peril, than a fair-weather inland navigation would have done to those who had never seen the sea."

On the 1st July, they parted. "If ever shadow of future ill darkened the present hour, such," remarks Mrs. Shelley, "came over my mind, when they went. During the whole of our stay at Lerici, an intense presentiment of coming evil brooded over my mind, and covered this beautiful place, and genial summer, with the shadow of coming misery. I had vainly struggled with these emotions—they seemed accounted for by my illness; but at this hour of separation, they recurred with renewed violence. I did not anticipate danger from them, but a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony, and I could scarcely bring myself to let them go. The day was calm and clear, and a breeze rising at twelve o'clock, they weighed for Leghorn. They made the run in seven hours and a half. I have heard that Shelley all the time was in brilliant spirits. Not long before, talking of presentiments, he had said the only one he had ever found infallible, was the certain event of some evil fortune when he felt particularly joyous.

Yet if ever fate whispered of coming disasters, such inaudible, but not unfelt prognostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess; the distance we were from all signs of civilisation, the sea at our feet, its murmurs and its roaring ever in our ears, all these things led the mind to brood over strange things, and lifting it from every-day life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal!"

That Shelley was not free from these presentiments, which shook Mrs. Shelley, is evident from lines which he wrote almost immediately before this fatal voyage, beginning,—

When the lamp is shattered,
and ending—

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky,
From thy roof every rafter
Will rot; and thine eagle home
Leave the naked to laughter,
When leaves fall, and cold winds come.

The only two letters which Shelley wrote during his absence, were addressed, one to Mrs. Shelley, and the other to Mrs. Williams. His indecision about his own plans, caused by a fresh exile of the Gambas, and by the *tracasserie* respecting the Liberal and Hunt's affairs, on which he placed his whole dependence, detained Shelley unwillingly; and he says, that Lord Byron must of course furnish the funds, as he cannot, and that he cannot depart without the necessary explanations and arrangements due to such a situation as Hunt's (aggravated as it was, by Mrs. Hunt's desperate state of health.) These, he concludes by saying, he must procure, and that Lord Byron offers him the copyright of the *Vision of Judgment* for the first number. This offer, if sincere, he prognosticates, "is *more* than enough to set up the journal, and if sincere, will set everything right!" How much he erred in this anticipation was seen by the sequel; but the tide of cant was at that time running so strong, that perhaps all the

talent in the world would only have prolonged the fate of that periodical. It seems, however, that Shelley had on mature reflection abandoned the idea of joining in it, "partly from pride, not wishing to have the air of acquiring readers for his poetry, by associating it with the compositions of more popular writers, or because he might feel shackled in the free expression of his opinions, if any friends were to be compromised. By those opinions, carried even to their utmost extent, he wished to live and die, as being in his conviction not only true, but such as would conduce to the moral improvement and happiness of mankind." Mrs. Shelley adds that "the sale of the work might meanwhile either really or supposedly be injured by the free expression of his thoughts, and this evil he resolved to avoid."

His letter to Mr. Williams closes with the following passages, the last of which may be considered a singular prognostic.

"I fear you are solitary and melancholy at

Villa Magni, and in the intervals of the greater and more serious distress in which I am compelled to sympathize here, I figure to myself the countenance which has been the source of such consolation to me, shadowed by a veil of sorrow. How soon those hours passed, and how slowly they return to pass so soon away, *perhaps forever*, in which we have lived together so intimately, so happily!" And speaking of these strange, ominous forebodings and fears, although I am no doater on dreams, to use the words of Southey, "there are dreams which are monitory above the power of fancy, and impressed on us by some superior influence;" and of such were the presentiments to which Shelley was subject.

His thoughtful regard for, and sacrifice of his own happiness, to that of others, is also made manifest in this letter, in which he says, "I shall urge Williams to sail with the first fair wind, without expecting me. I have thus the pleasure of contributing to your happiness, when deprived of every other, and of leaving you no other sub-

ject of regret but the absence of one scarcely worth regretting!!”

This half-formed plan of making Williams his forerunner, it seems, was abandoned, and on the 8th day of July, the friends, whose epitaph Shelley had written, got under weigh for St. Arengo.

They were two friends, whose life was undivided.
So let them mingle. Sweetly they had glided
Under the grave. Let not their dust be parted,
For their two hearts in life were single-hearted.

How prophetic was that epitaph! and well might he have apostrophised the ocean with—

Unfathomable sea!

That sick of prey, yet howlest on for more,
Vomiting thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore,
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Inhospitable sea?

The weather, which had been for some days calm and sultry, all at once changed from a Sirocco to a Mistral, but Shelley, who had no dread of

his favourite element, and was anxious to return to those he loved, was not to be deterred from his purpose. The sky indeed bore so unpropitious an aspect, that he had been advised to put off his departure, at least till the Bolivar could be got under weigh, to convoy them. His eagerness, however, admitted of no delay, and with a fair but faint wind, they hoisted all sail, and left the port,—an English boy added to the boat's crew, by name Charles Vivian.

It is a strange coincidence, that I should have been exposed to the same squall, which proved fatal to two of my oldest and best friends. I embarked on the 5th day of July with a party with whom I was acquainted, on board a merchant vessel we had hired at Naples for the voyage to Genoa; during the first two days, we had very light winds, lying becalmed one whole night off the Pontine Marshes, where some of our passengers were attacked with malaria, but which, though sleeping on deck in my cloak, I escaped. On the fourth day, the tail of the Sirocco brought us

into the gulf of Genoa. That gulf is subject in the summer and autumn, to violent gusts of wind, and our captain, an experienced sailor, as the breeze died away, foresaw that we should not get into port that night. The appearance of the sky was very threatening. Over the Apennines, which encircle Genoa as with an amphitheatre, hung masses on masses up-piled, like those I have seen after the explosion of a mine, of dark clouds, which seemed to confirm his opinion. The squall at length came, the precise time of which I forget, but it was in the afternoon; and neither in the bay of Biscay, or Bengal, nor between the Tropics, nor on the Line, did I ever witness a severer one; and being accompanied by a heavy rain, it was the more felt. We had, however, close-reefed, and were all snug and in comparatively smooth water, in consequence of the squall blowing right off the shore. We must have been five or six miles from the bay of Spezzia when it burst on us. As I stood with the glass upon deck, only one sail was visible to leeward; its rig differed

from the ordinary one of the Mediterranean, the *latine*, and from the whiteness of her canvas, and build, we took her for an English pleasure-boat. She was hugging the wind with a press of sail, and our skipper observed, that she would soon have it. As he spoke, a fierce gust drove furiously along, blackening the water, and soon enfolded the small craft in its misty arms; or in Shelley's own words,—

Enveloping the ocean like a pall,
It blotted out the vessel from the view.

Then came a lull, and as soon as we looked in the direction of the schooner, no trace of her was visible.

Captain Roberts's account tallies with this. He watched from the lighthouse of Leghorn, with a glass, the vessel in its homeward track; they were off Via Reggio, at some distance from shore, when a storm was driven over the sea. It enveloped this and several larger vessels in darkness. When the cloud passed onwards,

Roberts looked again, and saw every other vessel sailing on the ocean, except this little schooner, which had vanished.

Little did I suppose, though I had heard from Shelley and Williams at Naples, that they had received the boat, and were settled at Villa Magni ; that this schooner, which disappeared, was Shelley's. That she should have carried so much canvas, for her gaff-topsails were set, might be considered unsailor-like ; but it must be remembered, that the coast is very shallow, and full of reefs, which stretch out a considerable distance from land, and that it was necessary to carry all sail in order to keep clear of the surf, that rises very high along the coast. The only chance of their safety would have been to tack or wear, and drive before the wind, and return to Leghorn. But this idea probably never entered into Shelley's or Williams's mind, and from my knowledge of both their characters, they would, I am sure, have incurred any risk rather than have given up the voyage. Perhaps they were insensible to the danger till it was too late.

After tacking about all night, and the best part of the next day, we at length beat into the harbour of Genoa. There was a rumour at the Hotel de l'Europe, that an English schooner had been lost, and two Englishmen drowned in the gale near Lerici, but it never struck me that this schooner was Shelley's, and that he and Williams were the individuals; and after writing to them at the Villa Magni, I proceeded on my journey to Geneva. There, many days after my arrival, I heard from Mrs. Shelley the melancholy news of her irreparable loss, and without delay recrossed the Alps. At Spezzia the people of the place told me where the bodies of my friends had been cast on shore: they had been thrown on the beach, not together, but several miles apart, and the English boy's five miles from that of Shelley. The following verses, written in his eighteenth year, recurred to me, which seem entirely out of place where they stand, and as poets sometimes have been inspired by a sort of second-sight, were prophetic that the ocean would be his grave.

To-morrow comes !

Cloud upon cloud with dark and deepening mass
Roll o'er the blackened waters ; the deep roar
Of distant thunder mutters awfully ;
Tempest unfolds his pinions o'er the gloom
That shrouds the boiling surge ; the pitiless fiend
With all his winds and lightnings tracks his prey,
The torn deep yawns—the vessel finds a grave
Beneath its jagged jaws.

I arrived at Pisa some hours later than I could have wished, for Lord Byron and Leigh Hunt and Trelawney, had been engaged since the morning in burying Shelley's remains. The history of this funeral pyre has been so much misrepresented, that I shall premise it with a few observations. Fourteen days elapsed between the loss of the schooner and the finding of the corpses of my friends, and neither of them were in a state to be removed to consecrated ground ; but an obstacle to such removal under any circumstances, was, that by the quarantine laws, their friends were not permitted to have possession of their relics. The laws with respect to everything

cast on land by the sea, being, that it must be burned, in order to prevent the possibility of any remnant bringing the plague into Italy.

A consultation took place between Byron, Hunt and Trelawney, on this subject. It had not only been the oft-repeated wish of Shelley to be buried at Rome, and there rejoin his favourite child William, who lay there, but he had left it as a sacred charge to Lord Byron, whom he had appointed as executor to his will, to fulfil this office of friendship for him. Even had the state of Shelley's corse admitted of being transported to Rome, they were assured by the authorities that no representation of theirs would have altered the law ; and were it not for the kind and unwearied exertions of Mr. Dawkins, our *chargé d'affaires* at Florence, permission would not have been gained for Mrs. Shelley to receive the ashes, after they had been consumed. I say, I arrived at Pisa too late. True to his engagement, Byron and his friends had gone that day to perform the singular and pious duty of watching his funeral

pyre, in order that the ashes might be sent to the English cemetery at Rome. They came to a spot marked by an old withered pine-tree, and near it, on the beach, stood a solitary ruined hut, covered with thatch. The place was well chosen for a poet's grave. Some few weeks before, I had ridden with Shelley and Byron to the very spot, which I have since visited in sad pilgrimage. Before them lay a wide expanse of the blue Mediterranean, with the islands of Elba and Gorgona visible in front; Lord Byron's yacht, the Bolivar, riding at anchor at some distance in the offing. On the other side appeared an almost illimitable sandy wilderness, and uninhabitable, only broken here and there by some stunted shrubs, twisted by the sea-breeze, and stunted by the barrenness and drought of the ground in which they strove to grow. At equidistance, along the coast, rose high square towers, for the double purpose of protecting the coast from smugglers, and enforcing the quarantine regulations. This view was completed by a range of the far-off

Italian Alps, that from their many folded and volcanic character, as well as from their marble summits, gave them the appearance of glittering snow ; to finish the picture, and as a foreground, was placed a remarkable group.

Lord Byron with some soldiers of the coast guard, stood about the burning pyre, and Leigh Hunt, whose feelings and nerves could not carry him through the scene of horror, lying back in the carriage ; the four post-horses panting with the heat of the noonday sun, and the fierceness of the fire. The solemnness of the whole ceremony was the more felt by the shrieks of a solitary curlew, which perhaps attracted by the corpse, wheeled in narrow circles round the pile, so narrow that it might have been struck with the hand. The bird was so fearless, that it could not have been driven away. I am indebted to one of the party present, for the interesting particulars of this scene, but must add to it Leigh Hunt's account. He says—"The weather was beautifully fine. The Mediterranean, now soft and liquid, kissed

the shore, as if to make peace with it. The yellow sand and blue sky entirely contrasted with one another, marble mountains touched the air with coolness, and the flame of the fire bore towards Heaven its vigorous amplitude, waving and quivering with the brightness of inconceivable beauty. It seemed as if it contained the glassy essence of volatility. One might have expected a sun-bright countenance to look out of it, coming once more before it departed, to thank the friends who had done their duty."

I have understood that Leigh Hunt was much offended at the account above given respecting the carriage, but why I am at a loss to guess. To what purpose should he have stood for some hours by the side of the scorching furnace, when there were so many others of stronger nerves, and of better health, present? This extreme sensitiveness on his part is much out of place, for neither my informant nor myself had the slightest intention of throwing on him a taunt, or taxing him with the slightest dereliction of duty. His regard for Shelley is not to be ques-

tioned. The very excess of feeling that he displayed, might, in default of other proofs, have best testified it.

But Byron was unable long to withstand the sight, or perhaps the heat, and by way of distraction, swam off to his yacht.

Writing to Mr. Moore, he says,—

“The other day, at Via Reggio,”—he does not specify the day of the burning,—“I thought proper to swim off to my schooner, the Bolivar, in the offing, and thence to shore again, about three miles or better, in all. As it was at mid-day, under a broiling sun, the consequence has been a feverish attack;” and then he adds, in another paragraph of the same letter, though not connecting the burning with the swimming,—“We have been burning the bodies of Shelley and Williams. You can have no idea what an extraordinary effect such a funeral pyre has on a desert shore, with mountains in the background, and the sea before,—the singular appearance the salt and frankincense give to the flames.”

Much objection has been started to these accessories to the funeral pyre, which have been condemned as bearing the character of a heathen rite; but without them it would not only have been dangerous to have assisted at the ceremony, but from the state of the body it would have been intolerable.

In the evening I saw Lord Byron. He was in a high state of fever, from the excitement of the day, combined with exposure for some hours to the sun, in swimming and floating. He was, indeed, almost amphibious, and I have often thought that he must have possessed, as is sometimes known, a peculiar and natural buoyancy,* for he could remain for hours in the water, as he had done that day. The next morning, save and except some blisters, which he said were not confined to his face, he was pretty well recovered.

* Lord H. tells me that when he was at Venice, he saw a crowd of persons watching a torch moving on the Lagune, and found that it indicated the presence of Lord Byron, who had swum from Lido with one arm, the other lifting the flambeau.

Mrs. Shelley and her son Percy, and Mrs. Williams and her two children, had already arrived at Pisa, and it was a melancholy satisfaction to hear their narrative of this tragedy, that threw for them a shadow over the world. During more than a week, passed with them and Lord Byron, we canvassed the whole sad catastrophe, and I learnt further particulars of the loss of the

fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That laid so low that sacred head.

It would seem that both Shelley and Williams had been alike insensible to the squall, for the boat was seen to go down with all her sails set. They could not, therefore, have anticipated it, and must have kept a very bad look out, as proved afterwards by Roberts's discovering her, sunk in ten fathoms water,—not capsized, but uninjured; and I may here mention that he possessed himself of her, and decked her, and sailed in her, but found her unseaworthy, and that her

shattered planks now lie rotting on the shore of one of the Ionian Islands, on which she was wrecked. But hoping to be excused this anacronism, I will go on to say, that Williams was an expert swimmer, and had, as the boat was filling, found time partially to undress himself, or might have done so in the water, nor can there be a doubt that he made every effort to save his life—perhaps that of his friend, whilst Shelley, who could never learn to swim, had been reading to the last moment, quite unconscious or heedless of danger, and lost in abstraction like a second Archimedes ; for when found, he had his right hand and arm locked in his waistcoat, where he had in haste thrust a volume of Keats's Poems, open at the Eve of St. Agnes, a poem which he wonderfully admired, and after the death of his brother poet, carried continually about with him the book. Mrs. Williams painted to me the days and nights of horror herself and Mrs. Shelley had passed during the eight days of suspense that intervened between

the loss of the schooner and some of the wreck being cast on shore.

“Then,” says Mrs. Shelley, “the spell was snapped. It was all over—an interval of agonizing doubt, of days passed in miserable journeys to gain tidings,—of hopes that took firmer root even as they were more baseless, were changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors for evermore.” In the meanwhile, their absence was attributed first to the rough weather, and they consoled themselves with the reflection, that they might have deferred their departure from this circumstance. Then came a letter of enquiry from Trelawney, which soon dissipated that conjecture. He arrived to console them with the thought that Shelley and Williams had taken refuge in one of the islands, Gorgona, or perhaps Sardinia, and their eyes were continually directed seaward, in the hope of descrying the well-known sail.” Day followed day,—

O!

The hours for those who watched for him,
With chill forebodings, and with fluttering hearts :
There lay the uniform blank sea, that gave
No certain tidings, but left ample space
For miserable doubt, report, and hope
Beyond all hope.

But the fatal news was at last brought by the discovery, first of one body, and then of the other. In a poem, which I dedicated to Lord Byron, I endeavoured to depict the awful suspense of those days, and under the name of Julian, to idealize Shelley, and describe his funeral pyre. I copy some passages from a rough draft, not having the original, and imperfectly, for the rythm is here and there defective, and the rhymes wanting ; but the lines may serve as a transcript of my feelings, are such as all hearts may sympathise in, and may not be considered out of place here.

The storm is up—in haste they reach
A pathway winding from the beach—
That hope-winged speed arrests their tears.
A flash ! the curving coast appears,

The isles in front, and all beyond,
A raging sea without a bound.
Where is the boat? no boat is there,
That bay's lone moanings mock despair!
Where is the boat? they gaze again—
Look they for comfort to the main?

On that wild waste of waves they gaze,
And fancy, in the lightning's blaze,
Paints every breaker as a sail
In safety riding out the gale;
And once they thought they could descry
A floating form—oh, misery!
And hear a swimmer's drowning cry.

They gazed, how long they knew not on,
That wilderness,—and yet
They ceased not with the rising sun
To gaze—nor when he set.
They spoke not—stirred not all that day,
None ever passed so slow away;
So cold to feel—so drear to see—
Such doubt was worse than certainty!

Another, and another day!
It ill became, like common clay,
That form so fair to rot;
To bleach upon the dark green sea,
To wandering fish and birds a prey;
Alas! why comes he not?

The faded flower, its scent and hue,
Ah tell me whither are they flown ?
Canst thou revive their charms anew ?
Will the torn bud expand for you,
The promise of its leaves unblown ?
The accents of the broken lyre—
Tell me, too, whither are they gone ?
Go ! re-unite the parted wire,
Reanimate the spirit fled
Of music, that with magic lure,
Had spells medicinal, to cure
All pangs but love's—then, only then
Seek life among the dead !

The words were his, but words are vain—
Rash spoken—straight recalled again ;
And these, his “ancient comrade Pain,”
Wrung from an overheated brain.
Oh, say not with the spirit fled,
That earth's affections all are dead,
That in that world of woe or weal,
A world there is, we cease to feel,
Have unforget to prove,
For those whom we have left below,
As pure, and as intense a glow
Of pity and of love !

Night followed night, day day of woes—
One more, an age, is at its close ;

But as the sun's broad disk declined,
Led by a sea-bird's scream, they find,
Waif of the ocean, where he lies,
The fairest thing beneath the skies.
Oh! 'twas a piteous sight to see
One they had loved so tenderly,
Cast like a worthless weed away,
 The tresses of his profuse hair
Undabbled by the ooze or spray,—
He lies like one who mocks decay,
 Best fitted for a mermaid's lair,
Or some cold Nereide's bridegroom to be,
In the dark caves of the unfathomed sea.

It was the azure time of June!
And now beneath the depth of noon,
So cloudless, that the infantine moon
Broke with her rising horn, the line
Of the snow-fringed Apennine;
 A pyre they raise with pious care,
For thus he wished his dust, when driven,
And scattered to the winds of Heaven,
 Should to its elements repair;
His parted spirit hovering nigh,
Commingle with the spangled sky,
 To be the overhanging day,
The soul of that Elysian isle,
 Its breath and life; that he and they,

So loved—in that divinest clime,
Should bask in nature's genial smile,
And gladden all things thro' all time ;
Transfigure—transfused, be one
Beneath the universal sun.

And lo ! the silver-winged sea-mew !
That round and round the reeking pyre
In ever lessening circles flew,
That bird was now so tame,
Scarce could they scare it from the fire
Of that funereal flame ;
For still it shrieked, as in the storm,
A human voice it might be deemed,
So piteous and so wild it screamed,
As loth to leave that lifeless form.
And all who saw the bird, had said,
“ It was the spirit of the dead.”

Mr. Galt, in his *Life of Byron*, has described the conduct of the party who assisted at Shelley's funeral pyre, as resembling on their return that of frantic Bacchanals, after tearing limb from limb, Pentheus. It is a pure fiction,—poetical and classical, certainly ; but no scene of the sort occurred.

Singularly enough, Shelley, in the *Epipsychion*, seems to have foreseen the nature of his funeral.

Aradiant death—a fiery sepulchre.

I heard from my friends, that Shelley had been subject during this *Villagiatura*, at the Casa Magni, to strange hallucinations, and from the description of the place, which I had afterwards an opportunity of verifying, it is scarcely to be wondered that his imagination, as happened in Carnarvonshire, naturally given to the marvellous, should have been strangely excited, and grown familiar with the Unreal. The extreme isolation of St. Arenzo—its almost magical and supernatural beauty—the continual beating of the sea-waves against the walls of that solitary villa—the sort of reading in which he indulged there, and a mind ever on the rack with profound metaphysical speculations, dreamy and vague, engendered in him a nervousness, that produced extraordinary waking dreams. Williams

records in his interesting journal, the following anecdote:—"After tea, walking with Shelley on the terrace, and observing the effect of moonshine on the water, he complained of being unusually nervous—he grasped me violently by the arm, and stared steadfastly on the white surf, that broke upon the beach under our feet. Observing him sensibly affected, I demanded of him if he were in pain, but he only answered, by saying,—*"There it is again—There !"* He recovered after some time, and declared that he saw, as plainly as he saw me, a naked child (*the child of a friend who had lately died*,—meaning his own child) rise from the sea, and clap its hands as in joy, smiling at him. This was a trance that it required some reasoning and philosophy entirely to awaken him from; so forcibly had the vision operated on his mind." But this was not the only illusion to which he had been a prey at St. Arenzo. Byron, the most superstitious of human beings, related the following story, which I afterwards heard confirmed by Mrs. Williams.

“ Shelley, soon after he arrived at the Casa Magni, one night alarmed all the house with loud and piercing cries. The Williams’s rushed out of their rooms, and Mrs. Shelley, who had miscarried a few days before, got at the same time as far as the door, and fainted. They found Shelley in the saloon, with his eyes wide open, and gazing on vacancy, with a horror as though he saw some spectre. He was in a deep trance, a sort of somnambulism. On waking him, he related to them that he had had a vision. He thought that a figure wrapped in a mantle, came to his bedside, and beckoned him. He got up, and followed, and when in the drawing-room, the phantom lifted up the hood of his cloak, and said, “ *Siete sodisfatto*,” and vanished.

He had been reading a strange drama, attributed to Calderon, entitled the El Encapotado. It is so rare, that Washington Irving told me he had hunted for it, but without success, in several of the public libraries of Spain. The story is, that a sort of Cypriano, or Faust, is through life thwarted

in his plans for the acquisition of wealth or honour or happiness, by a mysterious stranger, who stands in his way like some evil spirit. The hero is at length in love—we know it is the master-passion in Spaniards. The day is fixed for his nuptials, when the unknown contrives to sow dissension between him and his bride elect, and to break off the match. Infuriate with his wrongs, he breathes nothing but revenge; but for a time all attempts to hunt out his mantled foe prove abortive; at length he presents himself of his own accord. When about to fight, the *embocado* unmasks, and discovers the Fetch of himself—his *double*, saying, “Are you satisfied?” The catastrophe is the death of the victim from horror.

The play, which would have made a most admirable subject for Hoffman, worked strongly on Shelley’s imagination, and accounts for the midnight scene.

Mr. Moore says that “the melancholy death of poor Shelley, affected Lord Byron’s mind much

less with grief for the actual loss of his friend, than with bitter indignation against those who had through life so grossly misinterpreted him ; and never certainly was there an instance where the expressed absence of all religion in an individual was assumed so eagerly as an excuse for the absence of all charity in judging him." He adds, that, " though never personally acquainted with Mr. Shelley, I can fully join with those who much loved him, in admiring the various excellences of his heart and genius, and lamenting the too early doom that robbed us of the maturer fruits of both. His short life," he goes on to say, " had been, *like his poetry, " a sort of bright, erroneous dream ! false in the general principles on which it proceeded, though beautiful and attractive in some of its details !* Had full time been allowed for the over-light of his imagination, to be tempered by the judgment which in time was still in reserve, the world at large would have been taught to pay that homage to his genius which those only who saw what he

was capable of, (what does Moore mean by this ?) can now be expected to accord to it."

Faint praise, and coming from the quarter it does, and from one totally unable to estimate anything but the actual and material, not much to be regarded.

Returning to Lord Byron's superstition, I will cite as a proof thereof, the following anecdote from "the Page of Moore." "Mr. Cowell, paying a visit to Lord Byron at Genoa, was told by him, that some friends of Shelley sitting together one evening, had seen that gentleman distinctly, as they thought, walk into a little wood at Lerici; when at the same moment, as they afterwards discovered, he was far away, in quite a different direction. "This," added Lord Byron, in a low, awestruck tone of voice, "was but ten days before Shelley died!"

I believe Lord Byron felt severely the loss of Shelley, though it must be confessed that his observation at the pyre,—“Why this rag of a black handkerchief retains its form better

than that human body ;” and his saying on the contest that took place between Mrs. Shelley and Leigh Hunt, respecting the possession of Shelley’s heart, which would not consume with his ashes, (and which amiable dispute he compared to that of Ajax and Ulysses for the arms of Achilles,) and his remark,—“ What does Hunt want with the heart? he’ll only put it in a glass-case, and make sonnets on it”—savoured strongly of Don Juan. I believe, I say, that he really did lament the loss of Shelley. He knew well his superiority over his other correspondents,—knew that his friendship for him, so often proved, was pure and disinterested, and free from all worldly considerations, and that the sundering of that tie left him without a real friend in the world.

On the 22nd of August, I took leave of Mrs. Shelley, Mrs. Williams, and Lord Byron, to return to Genoa.

I performed this journey in a *caratella*, with relays of one horse, a mode of conveyance,

which Mathews, the invalid, had reason for recommending, for it enabled me to make much more progress than I could have done by regularly posting with two. I shall not enter into my feelings during this mournful pilgrimage to the sites of my friends' funeral pyres, at some distance apart, easily discoverable by their ashes. I had another duty to perform, to visit the country house where they had passed their *villegiatura*.

From Sarzana to Lerici there is only a cross (and that a narrow) carriage road. After a somewhat difficult ascent of three miles, the *caleche* set me down at a bye footpath, which conducts to St. Arenzo. The sky was perfectly cloudless, and not a breath of air relieved the intense heat of an Italian August sun. The day had been unusually oppressive, and there was a mistiness in the atmosphere, or rather a glow which softened down the distances into those mellow tints, in which Claude delighted to bathe his landscapes. I was little in a mood to enjoy

the beauties which increased every moment during this walk. I followed mechanically a pathway overhung with trellised vines, and bordered with olive trees, contrasted here and there with the massy broad dark foliage of the fig-tree. For a mile or two, I continued to ascend, till on a sudden a picture burst on my view, that no pen could describe. Before me was the broad expanse of the Mediterranean, studded with islands, and a few fishing boats with their lattine sails, the sun's broad disc just dipping in the waves.

Thick groves of fruit trees, interspersed with cottages and villas, sloped down to the shores of the gulf of Spezia; and safely land-locked, a little to the left Lerici, with its white flat-roofed houses almost in the sea, stood in the centre, and followed the curve of this bay; the two promontories projecting from which, were surmounted with castles, for the protection of the coast, and the enforcement of the quarantine laws. The descent, now become rapid and broken, and deeply worn into the rock, only offered occasional

glimpses of the sea, the two islets in front, and the varied coast of Porto Venere to the right. I now came in sight of St. Arenzo, a village, or rather a miserable collection of windowless black huts, piled one above the other, inclosed within and imbedded, like swallows' nests, in the rocks that overhang and encircle it. The place is inhabited solely by fishermen and their families, on the female part of whom devolves (as is common in Italy) the principal labours. However ungraceful in itself, the peasantry of most parts of Italy have some peculiarity of costume, but the women of St. Arenzo are in a savage state of nature, perfect *Ichthyophagæ*; their long, coal-black hair trails in greasy strings, unwashed and uncombed over their faces; and some of these fiendish looking creatures had not even fastened it in a knot behind the head, but suffered it to hang half way down their backs. They had neither shoes nor stockings, and the rags which scarcely hid their deformity, were strongly impregnated with the effluvia of the fish they were

carrying on their bare heads to the neighbouring markets. Their children were just such meagre yellow imps, as from such mothers and filth and and poverty of food, might be supposed. The men I did not see ; they were most probably following the occupation of fishing.

Between this village and Lerici, but nearer the former, was pointed out to me the solitary villa, or *palazzo* as it is called, which was about to waken in me so many bitter recollections. It is built immediately upon the beach, and consists of one story ; the ground-floor, when the Libeccio set strongly in, must have been washed by the waves.

A deaf, unfeeling old wretch, a woman who had the care of the house, and had either witnessed or heard of all the desolation of which it had been the scene, with a savage unconcern, and much garrulity, gave a dry narrative of the story, as she led me through the apartment.

Below was a large unpaved sort of entrance-hall, without doors or windows, where lay the

small flat-bottomed boat, or skiff, much shattered, of which I have already spoken. It was the same my poor friends had on the Serchio. Against the wall, and scattered about the floor, were oars and fragments of spars,—they told too well the tale of woe.

A dark and somewhat perpendicular staircase now led us to the only floor that remained. It reminded me somewhat in its arrangement, of an Indian bungolow; the walls whitewashed. The rooms, now without furniture, consisted of a saloon and four chambers at the four corners; this, with the exception of a terrace in front, was the whole apartment. The verandah, which ran the entire length of the villa, was of considerable width, and the view from it of a magical and supernatural beauty.

There was now a calm desolation in the unrippled marble of the sea, that reminded me in its contrast, of the days and nights of tempest and horror which Mrs. Shelley and Mrs. Williams experienced, balanced between hope and

fear for the fate of their beloved husbands—fancying that every sail would bring them to their homes, and now that in the roaring of every wave they could distinguish their drowning cries, I could picture to myself the ghastly smile with which Trelawney related the finding of the corpses,—the torpor and unconsciousness of Mrs. Williams,—the sublime firmness of Mrs. Shelley, contrasted with her frame worn out with sickness,—their children, too young to be sensible of their loss, clasped in their despairing and widowed mothers' arms. All this rushed upon my imagination, and insensible to the heat, or fatigue of the ascent, I found myself, scarcely knowing how, where my caleche was waiting for me; and it was midnight, and after a twenty-two hours' journey, more harassing in mind and body than I had ever experienced, when I reached the inn at Spezia.

The ashes of Shelley were borne to Rome by one of his friends, who had been most active and instrumental in conquering the objections of the authorities to their collection, who

By supplications and unwearied prayers
Hardly prevailed to wrest the stubborn law
Aside thus far ;

and who, after making all due and decent preparations for the funeral-pyre, at which he was the chief mourner, “ committed with hands scorched and blistered by the flames, the burnt relics to a receptacle prepared for the purpose, and then in compass of a small case, was gathered all that remained on earth of him whose genius and virtues were a crown of glory to the world, whose love had been the source of happiness, pure and good.” But on their arrival at Rome, considerable scruples arose in the mind of the clergyman applied to to officiate, concerning the burying in consecrated ground, ashes. A friend of mine, himself no mean poet, and who wrote an elegy on Shelley worthy of a place here, and whose position in life gave him some weight, exerted himself, and successfully, in smoothing the difficulty ; and a day was fixed for the interment. The funeral was attended by most

of the English still lingering in the metropolis of the world. The crowd of strangers that people it from all countries, had withdrawn, and left only behind a few stragglers, and lovers of art, and mourners over the once great queen of the universe, loth to quit it, as mourners the grave of one beloved.

This friend writing to me says,—“ Behold the melancholy cortege taking up its line, and following the remains of him, who should have had a distinguished place in the great national cemetery of the poets of his country, to the Protestant burial-ground, which had been unwillingly accorded, through the intercession of Cardinal Gonsalvi, prime minister of Pope Pius VI., to us heretics. That last refuge for the stranger-dead, lies, as you know, at the further extremity of the Eternal City, and to get to it, we had to traverse Rome in all its length. I was never so impressed by any funeral; we viewed on all sides the tottering porticoes, the isolated columns, which told me of the ravages of the

Goths and Vandals, those savages, after gorging themselves in the blood of the vanquished, those barbarians, who insatiate of slaughter, when they had nothing else to destroy, vented their jealous rage on the creations of genius, which like the spectres of their victims, seemed to stand in mockery and defiance. They could shatter the mighty giantess, tear her limb from limb; but the Torso, like that of the Vatican, the admiration of Michael Angelo in his blindness, yet remained to suggest that she had been. They could melt the Roman cement, enwrap her domes in flames, throw down her statues from their heights that frowned upon them, and when tired of the labour of destruction, encumber the bed of the Tiber with her mutilated remains.

“It was impossible for the coldest or most insensible and ignorant of our train, to pass, without somewhat of such emotions, those monuments of Roman greatness. Neither my companion nor myself spoke, or expressed our admiration or sympathy, that were too strong for

words. Self-absorbed, I allowed my ideas to wander, lost in the past. I neither gave the ruins names, nor suggested doubts as to the period of their erection ; whether they were of the time of Julius Cæsar, or the Antonines. Nothing," he adds, "is so delightful as the mystery, the vagueness that hangs about most of what is left of ancient Rome, for it is this very scepticism and uncertainty that allow the imagination to revel in a world of dreams and visions, each more enchanting than the last. This idea brought with it many a passage in Shelley's works, which is made intelligible to our minds by a sort of divination,—not from the construction of the words themselves, but from the dim shadowing out of some profound and metaphysical idea, that from the imperfection of language, defies analysis ; and his Elegy on Keats more especially came into my contemplations, which I had by heart, and with it the prophetic augury of his finding a last asylum in Rome, with the friend of his heart.

Or go to Rome, at once the sepulchre—
Oh! not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought,
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought.
For such as he can lend, they borrow not.
Glory from those who made the world their prey.
And he is gathered to the kings of thought,
Who urged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome, at once the paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness,—
And where its wrecks, like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds and fragrant copses deck
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the spirit of the spot, shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where like an infant's smile, over the dead,
The light of laughing flowers along the turf is spread.

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid, with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, in which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished
breath.

Here pause.

Awaking from this reverie, I could scarcely recal my scattered senses, or return to the realities of life. I contemplated with a mixture of sorrow and regret, the ashes of one, who once shed a light upon the world—the extinction of a surpassing spirit that came for the world to know it not; and then the mouldering mass of temples, pillars, cornices, and columns broken and strewn around “the dusty nothing,” so well harmonizing with my own feelings,—the solemn scene—with that remnant of mortality, the ruins of him whom we were literally about to consign to kindred ruins—Ashes to Ashes—Dust to Dust!

We reached the Campo Santo. The graves were yet young, the tenants few in number; most of the mounds had not even a head-stone, whilst here and there a monument, surmounted by an urn of classical form and elegant design, shewed by the glittering whiteness of the marble, that

it was fresh from the hand of the sculptor.* They shewed themselves in relievo from the ancient and mouldering walls of the city, which bound the Campagna, partly hidden by a mass that just lifted itself above the horizon. It was the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, and seemed to frown in proud defiance, a giant among the pigmies, on the intruders upon its solitary greatness. They too seemed to have chosen the verge of the enclosure, as unwilling to mingle their clay with that of an idolatrous race, and an outworn creed. And who, asks Lord Byron, was Caius Cestius? The annals of his country contain no records of his deeds. His name is not even chronicled in story. Who was he, that he should have pavilioned his ashes, whilst so many heroes and patriots lie undistinguished and lost in the

*In 1820, Mr. G., a great oriental traveller, told me, that when he was in Athens, an English artist died there, and that it was the wish of his friends to erect a monument to him, but that not only no sculptor could be found to execute one, but not even a stone-mason to carve the letters of his name on a tablet!

dust of their country's desolation? What a lesson is here for mortality! what a homily to tell of

The more than empty honours of the tomb!*

Whether the same feelings operated on the assembly, I know not, I was blinded by my tears, that fell fast and silently on the poet's grave.

Oh!

It is a grief too deep for tears, when all
Is reft at once, when some surpassing spirit,
Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves
Those who remain behind, not sobs or groans,
The passionate tumult of a clinging hope,
But pale despair, and cold tranquillity,
Nature's vast frame—the web of human things,
Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.

Well might it be added,—

Art and eloquence,
And all the shows of the world are frail and vain,
To weep a loss that turns their light to shade.

* Sepulcri supervacuos honores.—*Horace*.

After the conclusion of the affecting rite, we visited the grave of his favourite son, William, and that of Keats—whose spirit it must soothe to feel the daisies growing over him—a dream that was here realized, for they absolutely starred the turf. Shelley seems in *Adonais* to have had a presage that he should soon rejoin his friend—be united with him in death, as they were in their destinies. Both were victims to the envenomed shafts of invidious critics,—to the injustice of those nearest to them, and who should have been dearest; both were cut off in the flower of their youth and talent, and both are sleeping among strangers in a foreign land. Little did either desire to sleep in the unmater-
nal bosom of their own. She was to them a harsh and unnatural step-mother. Here they sleep sweetly. Shelley's favourite wish, often expressed, was to repose here. He says,—“It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place;” and in a letter speaking of it, he calls it “the most

beautiful and solemn cemetery he ever beheld, and expresses his delight to see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh with dews, and hear the whispering of the winds among the leaves of the trees, which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius !”

A plain slab, overhung with parasite plants, and shrubs and flowers, contains the venerated name of Shelley, with the date of his birth, and death. Below which is the following inscription,—

Nothing of him but doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea change,
Into something rich and strange.

2. Lines to my mind very inapplicable, for they allude to one drowned, and lost at sea. Alas ! Poor Lycidas ! I could not help thinking a much more appropriate motto might have been selected from a poem I have heard him so often read, and admire :

So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high
Through the dear might of him who walks the waves.

Where other groves, and other streams among,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest regions meek of peace and love :
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory, move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.

Many "melodious tears" have been shed over the graves of Shelley and Keats, but none have more affected me than those offered by one, a native of a country from which Shelley frequently expressed a hope that he might in later times expect justice, America. The passage is so beautiful, that I transcribe it entire, being unwilling to spoil by garbling it. It is from the pen of Willis.

"With a cloudless sky, and the most delicious air I have ever breathed, we sate down upon the marble slab placed over the ashes of poor Shelley, and read his own Lament on Keats, who sleeps just below, at the foot of the hill. The cemetery is rudely formed into three ter-

paces, with walks between, and Shelley's grave, and one without a name, occupy a small niche above, made by the projection of a mouldering wall-tower, and crowded with many shrubs, and a peculiar fragrant yellow flower which perfumes the air around for several feet. The avenue by which you ascend from the gate, is lined with high branches of the musk-rose, in the most luxuriant bloom, and all over the cemetery the grass is thickly mingled with flowers of every hue. If Shelley had chosen his own grave at the time, he would have selected the very spot where he has since been laid—the most sequestered and flowery nook of the place he describes so feelingly;” and Mr. Willis adds,—“It takes away from the pain with which one stands over the grave of an acquaintance or friend, to see the sun lying so warm upon it, and the flowers springing so profusely and cheerfully. Nature seems to have a care for those who died so far from home.”

It was a much more melancholy visit I paid in the autumn of last year to Field-place. In

that home he was born, on that lawn he had played as a child,—there he had dreamed as a boy, and suffered as a man. The mansion of his forefathers I found deserted and in disrepair, the family dispersed, and it was about to be tenanted by a stranger to the county—a city alderman. I walked in moody sadness over the neglected shrubberies, paced the paths, weed over-grown and leaf-strewn, of the once neatly kept flower-gardens, where we had so often walked together, and talked in the confidentiality of early and unsophisticated friendship; there, too, he had in many a solitary hour brooded over his first disappointment in love, and had had his sensitive spirit torn by the coldness and alienation of those dearest to him. All this past through my mind.

How little did Rogers know of the human heart when he wrote the Pleasures of Memory!

I also visited the chancel in Horsham church, belonging to the family of Michell, his maternal

ancestors, where some of my own sleep. There a flattering inscription blazons the virtues of his father, but I was shocked to find that no cenotaph has been raised to the memory of the poet, that no record exists of one who will ennoble and perpetuate the name of Shelley, when the race that bears it shall become extinct. How true it is, that a prophet is no prophet in his own country; his family, too, seem to be quite unaware of his greatness, and deem him neither an honour nor a pride. Bristol has with a late repentance raised a statue to Chatterton,—but where lie his bones? Florence has at last done tardy justice to Dante, Stuttgart to Schiller, Frankfort to Göthe, and Mayence to Güttenberg. More liberal times will come, when Byron and Keats and Shelley will each find a niche, if not in that temple which has been so often profaned by the ashes of mediocrity, in some future Valhalla, worthy to enshrine them. But Shelley needs no monument. His fame, like the Pyramid beneath

which he sleeps, stands on a base unshaken and eternal. He lives in his works, and will live on through all time. But

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor is the glittering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove,
As he pronounces justly on each deed.
Of so much fame in Heaven expect the meed!

These Memorabilia would be incomplete, if I did not, in execution of my duty as a biographer, draw up, however imperfect, a summary of Shelley's character, both as a man and a poet, for which I am partly indebted to some of his contemporaries. I will begin with the last.

"Shelley's poetry is invested with a dazzling and subtle radiance, which blinds the common observer with excess of light. Piercing through this, we discover that the characteristics of his poetic writings are an excessive sympathy with the whole universe, material and intellectual—an

ardent desire to benefit his species, and an impatience of the tyrannies and superstitions that hold them bound. In all his works there is a wonderfully sustained sensibility, and a language lofty and fit for it. His ear was of the finest, and his command of language unrivalled. His mastery of words was so complete, and his majestic and happy combinations so frequent, that the richness is often obscured by the profusion." Again: "he has the art of using the stateliest words, and the most learned idioms, without incurring the charge of pedantry, so that passages of more splendid and sonorous writing, are not to be selected from any writer since the time of Milton; and yet when he descends from his ideal world, and comes home to us in our humble bowers and our yearnings after love and affection, he attunes the most natural feelings to a style so proportionate, and withal to a modulation so truly musical, that there is nothing to surpass it in the lyrics of Beaumont and Fletcher."

"His is the poetry of intellect, not that of the

Lakers—his theme is the high one of intellectual nature and lofty feeling, not of waggoners and idiot children. Like Milton, he does not love to contemplate clowns and vices, but the loftiest forms of excellence which his fancy can paint. His morality has also reference to the virtues which he admires, and not to the vices of which he is either unconscious, or ashamed. He looks upwards with passionate veneration, and seldom downwards with self-control.”

“ The view of external objects suggests ideas and reflections, as if the parting soul had awakened from a slumber, and saw, through a long vista, glimpses of a communion held with them in a distant past. It is like the first awaking of Adam, and the indolent expression of his emotions. Nature is like a musical instrument, whose tones again are keys to higher things in him,—the morning light causing the statue of Memnon to sound: the shadow of some unseen power of intellectual beauty, deriving much of its interest from its invisibility, floats,

though unseen, among his verses, resembling everything unreal and fantastic—the tones and harmonies of evening—the memory of music fled,

Or aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer to the memory.

Hear what Gutzkow says of him.—“ He had a soul like Ariel’s, and of the same character was his poetry—bright and sylph-like, it flutters like a golden fly over the face of the waters. His thoughts trembled as the flame of light trembles. He was like his own lark, and mounts higher and higher as he sings. He drew forth poetry from all things which lay in his way, that others pass by unheeded and unobserved. His transparent imagination was lit up by thought. Contemplation, reflection lent him the words that he called into his service. All that he wrote sprung from high and noble ideas. Above all others, he knew how to unlock and develope the nature and perfections of his poetry. He

could draw out a life from flowers, and even stones—from all that he saw, he discovered pictures for his poetry,—the loveliest similes stream from him in luxuriant fulness. In these his pictures, he could be as lovely as sublime. It is as though we saw the burning Africa of a Humboldt, going over the ice of the Alps. His forms of life raised themselves so high, that we could not follow him: but as a balloon by degrees is lost to the eye, though we cannot see it, we know that it is there.” It has been objected by a Scotch philosopher, that Shelley had a passion for reforming the world. To this he replies,—“I acknowledge that I have. But it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions *solely* to the direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider them in any degree as containing a reasoned system of the theory of human life.

“My purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarize the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers, with

beautiful idealisms of moral excellence, aware, that until the mind can love and admire, and trust and hope and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life, which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness."

It has been related by an able writer, from whom we have already quoted, that a man can only be understood by his peers, and his peers are few. The great man is also necessarily a reformer in some shape or other. Every reformer has to combat with existing prejudices and deep-rooted passions. To cut his own path, he must displace the rubbish that encumbers it. He is therefore in opposition to his fellow men, and attacks their interests. Blinded by prejudice, by passion, and by interest, they cannot see the excellence of him they oppose, and hence it is, as Heine has admirably said,—“Everywhere that a great soul gives utterance to his thoughts, there is Golgotha.”

It is not to his general system of *Æsthetics* to which I would extend my remarks, so much as to his theory of Intellectual Beauty and Universal Love, a theory which he interweaves in the woof of his poetry, and that indeed forms the ground-work of the web. Schiller's Kantism was too cold and obscure—Shelley's Platonism too mystic and ethereal; it admitted of no demonstration, was too profound and visionary to be reduced to reason, was only to be seized by the spirit, only a glimpse of it to be caught by contemplation and abstraction. Schiller wrote a long treatise, to make intelligible his philosophy, embodied in his *Ideal and Actual*, of which I subjoin a version—a poem which I never met with more than one German who pretended to explain. Shelley did not condescend to enlighten his readers. Having committed a grave error in penning his *Notes to Queen Mab*, he never ventured on a second experiment. His great master, Plato, searching after truth in the greatest heights and lowest depths, often but partially

seized it, being defeated by its very vastness ; ambitious to reveal it to mankind, he hesitated not to exhibit it in the form, and with the completeness he best could. It was necessary therefore, that what he but half knew himself, should be imperfect and darkly stated, and dimly comprehended by others. For this reason, his writings are obscure. They will always be obscure, in spite of the labours of the commentators ; for a commentary can make them plain only by substituting the reveries of the critic, for the inconsequent reasoning of the original. But Plato did not aim at darkness, any more than Shelley. If any one understood Plato, it was Shelley, and that which appears a wordy mist glowing in rainbow clouds, was to his own mind as clear and palpable as the sublimity of such contemplations was capable of being made. But how few can appreciate or comprehend him,—how inadequate and imperfect is all language, to express the subtilty and volatility of such conceptions of the Deity ! To the generality of

readers, his Metaphysics are so overlaid and buried beneath a poetic phraseology, that the mind, while it is undoubtedly excited, is left in a pleasing and half bewildered state, with visions of beautiful divine truth floating before it, which it is a vain attempt to arrest and convert to reality.

The fault of his system as the ground-work of life, is, that it requires intellects on a par with his own to revive it.

Platonism, as a poetic medium, as I have already observed, and must be excused for here repeating—very early captivated Shelley. It contains nothing common-place—nothing that has been worn threadbare by others; indeed it was an untried field for poetry, a *menstruum* from which he hoped to work out pure ore, but the sediment of mortality was left in the crucible. It would in the palmy days of Greece, have pleased a sect—have delighted Plato himself; but even at the period when Athens was in her glory, and the spectators at the theatre could

enjoy the Chorusses of Sophocles, it would, with all its high qualities, have had, if many admirers, no general popularity. But how speak of Deity and not be lost in the attempt to arrest the slightest shadow of that "Unseen Power," that Spirit of Love? How can beings, the *Infusoria* of creation, and inhabiting a world which is in the immensity of space but a grain of sand on an horizonless sea-shore, lift their thoughts to the great Author and Ruler of the universe of suns and stars, much less venture, "plumed with strong desire," to float above this dull earth, and clothe in words themselves too material,—

That light whose smile kindles the universe ;
That beauty in which all things work and move ;
That sustaining love,
Which through the web of being, blindly wove
By man and beast, and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst.

The very vagueness therefore, in which Shelley's imagination revelled, and for which he is

wrongly blamed, is more the fault of language, than his own—ever the fate of the Finite when speaking of the Infinite. It was a sense of the impossibility, and what he deemed the sacrilege of attempts to materialize God, that made him substitute for the popular representation of a God in the form of man, a pervading principle,—not as Mr. Moore calls it, “some abstract *nonentity* of love and beauty, as a substitute for Deity,” but as an attribute of Deity itself, resolving with Berkley, the whole of creation into spirit. For this reason he has been called an Atheist. It is true that in a moment of thoughtless and foolish levity, he in the Album of the Montanvert, wrote under his name a Greek line, which I have forgotten, ending with *Ἀθεοῦτε*, and which Southey, during his excursion in Switzerland,—he might have been better employed,—treasured up and reproached him with ten years after; but such evidence weighs nothing in comparison with the serious and recorded opinions laid down in his works, and to which momentary foolish freak

ἔμμε φιλανθρωπὸς
δημοκρατικός
ἁθεοῦτε

the purity of his life gave the lie. And speaking of what has been called Atheism, Lord Bacon, no mean authority, says of it in this sense, adopting the words of Plutarch,—“Atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and everything that can serve to conduct him to virtue, but *superstition* destroys all these, and erects itself into a tyranny over the understandings of men.” I will also quote a passage from Leigh Hunt, on the subject. He says of Spinoza, Giordano, Bruno, and other spirits of undoubted genius and integrity, who have been accused of the same opinion,—“that the Atheism of such men is but a vivid sense of the universe about them, trying to distinguish the mystery of its operations from the ordinary, and as they think pernicious Anthropomorphism, in which our egotism envelopes it;” and speaking of Cenci, he adds, “that the Atheism of such men is the only real Atheism; that is to say, it is the only real disbelief in any great and good thing, physical and

moral. For the same reason, there is more Atheism to all intents and purposes of virtuous and useful belief, in some bad religions, however devout, than in some supposed absence of religion; for the good they purpose to themselves does not rise above the level of the world they live in, except in power like a Roman emperor; so that there is nothing to them really outside the world at last. One act of kindness," he adds, "one impulse of universal benevolence as recommended by the true spirit of Jesus, is more grand and godlike than all the degrading ideas of the Supreme Being, which fear and slavery have tried to build up to heaven. It is a greater going out of ourselves, a higher and wider resemblance to the all-embracing placidity of the universe."

But whatever might be Shelley's speculations on the Nature of the Deity, no one was more fully convinced—and how many who affirm and confess, can question their hearts and say the same?—of the existence of a future state. Byron

writing to Mr. Moore, says, (I have not the passage before me, but I give it with sufficient fidelity,)—"You," (meaning Moore, Murray, Hobhouse, &c.,) "were mistaken about Shelley; he *does* believe in an Immortality." What does Shelley himself say, just before his death, in that sincerity of soul that *shines* through all his writings?—"Perhaps all discontent with the *less*, (to use a Platonic sophism,) supposes the sense of a just claim to the *greater*, and we admirers of Faust are in the right road to Paradise. Such a supposition is not more absurd, and is certainly less demoniacal, than that of Wordsworth, where he says,—

This earth,
Which is the world of all of us, and where
We find our happiness, or not at all.

As if after sixty years suffering here, we were to be roasted alive for sixty millions in Hell, or *charitably annihilated*."

Shelley once said to me, that a man was never a Materialist long. That he was much in-

clined to the opinions of the French school of philosophy, will appear by his life at Oxford, as given by Mr. Hogg; but he was soon dissatisfied (these are his own words,) with such a view of things—with such desolating doctrines, and I regret that Mrs. Shelley should have given publicity to that paper “On a Future State,” written, I doubt not, at a very early period, and before reason and judgment had tended to mature his mind, and led him to the study of Plato, and a firm belief in a blessed futurity. “The cold, ungenial, foggy atmosphere of northern metaphysics, was totally unsuited to the ardent temperature of his soul, that soon expanded in the warm, bright, vivifying climate of the southern and eastern philosophy.” A sufficient answer to the eloquent, but specious reasoning of Mirabeau, the Materialism of the “*Système de la Nature*,” so unanswerable to the mere matter-of-fact mind, is given in Shelley’s *Prometheus Unbound*. It is the best practical refutation of the maxim, that “there is nothing in the intellect, that was

not first in the senses," and of all the sorrowful deductions therefrom ; and when we read Shelley's apocalyptic *Triumph of Life*, and the *Epipsychidion*, we are almost inclined to Plato's belief, that all knowledge is but a remembrance of a first existence, revealed to us by the concord of poetry, the original form of the soul.

"That fantastic spirit, which would bind all existence in the visionary chain of intellectual beauty, became in Shelley the centre in which his whole intellectual and sensitive powers were united for its formation and embellishment ; and although in painting the romance, the conceits and diversities, the workings and meanderings of a heart penetrated with such an ideal passion, drawing less upon our individual sympathies than on those of social life, he may be liable to a charge of a certain mannerism ; there is not the less evident, the delicacy, elasticity, and concentration of a gentle and noble mind, a deep scorn of all that is vulgar and base, and a lofty enthusiasm for liberty and the glory of his

country, for science and for letters ; and finally, an insatiable longing after an eternal and incorruptible being, which opposed to his persuasion of the misery and nullity of this world, feeds and maintains that tension or struggle, that fire at the core, which is the inheritance of all privileged geniuses, the promoters of their age. Hence that restlessness coupled with the disdain of worldly things, that retirement and misanthropy joined to benevolence, and the yearning after love and affection, the pursuit of fame, and the intolerance of contemporary criticism, in conjunction with real and unaffected modesty ; and in fine, that contrast of virtue and weakness, which is the inheritance of flesh, so requisite seemingly to level the more sublime capacity with its fellow-creatures, and to inculcate the religious bond of union which Christian charity ought to inspire."

The author of these remarks, who I suspect to have been Carlisle, has thus admirably reconciled the seeming contrarities of Shelley's character.

But in looking back through the long vista of his life,—long I may well say, crowded as it was with so many romantic, so many strange events,—I can call to mind no one of them in which his heart was to blame, though his head might have erred. Three events stand prominently above the rest: his expulsion from Oxford—his disappointment in his first love, and his first unfortunate marriage—a *τρίκυμια*, or triple surf of ills; and from these flowed and ramified all the bitter streams that swelled his onward course of life. I shall not trace them back, — they, like Dante's inscription, are marked—"colore oscuro," in these Memorabilia.

There remains little more to add.

I think it will appear to all unprejudiced minds, that the following portrait of Shelley, by no means the first I have drawn, though all would be imperfect, will not be either over-coloured or over-varnished.

It is to be lamented, as I have already done,

that no good resemblance of Shelley exists. His features were small—the upper part of his face not strictly regular—the eyes unusually prominent, too much so for beauty. His mouth was moulded after the finest modelling of Greek art, and wore an habitual expression of benevolence, and when he smiled, his smile irradiated his whole countenance. His hands were thin, and expressed feeling to the fingers' ends, being such as Vandyke would have loved to paint; his hair profuse, silken, and naturally curling, was at a very early period interspersed with grey. His frame was but a tenement for spirit, and in every gesture and lineament showed that he was a portion of that intellectual beauty, which he endeavoured to deify. He did not look so tall as he was, being nearly five feet eleven, for his shoulders were a little bent by study and ill-health, owing to his being near-sighted, and leaning over his books; and which increased the narrowness of his chest. He had, however, though a delicate, a naturally good constitution, which he

had impaired at one period of his life by an excessive use of opium, and a Pythagorean diet, which greatly emaciated his system and weakened his digestion. He was twenty-nine when he died, and might have been taken for nineteen, for there was in him a spirit that seemed to defy time and suffering and misfortune. But if life is to be measured by events and activity, he had arrived at a very advanced age. He often said "that he had lived to a hundred," and singularly enough, remarks in one of his books,—“The life of a man of talent who should die in his *thirtieth year*, is, with regard to his own feelings, longer than that of a miserable priest-ridden slave, who dreams out a century of dulness. The one has perpetually cultivated his mental faculties, has rendered himself master of his thoughts, can abstract and generalise amid the lethargy of every-day business; the other can slumber over the brightest moments of his being, and is unable to remember the happiest hour of his life. Perhaps the perishing ephemeron

enjoys a longer life than the tortoise." Schiller, in his "Apportionment of the World," a poem taken in a ludicrous sense by Sir Edward Bulwer Litton, shews that this world was not made for a poet. If he has, however young, accomplished the task for which he was born,—if he has outworn his earthly clay, and entered into a new state of being here below, then is he ready and fit to depart; and it is best for him—better far than to endure the hollowness, the barrenness, the cold realities of every-day existence. To the poet one day is a thousand years; this little world, of which he himself and his fairy dreams are the sole inhabitants, circles round a sun of his own, brilliant beyond ordinary conceptions, and in an atmosphere to which that of our brightest day here, is but a dim and heavy mist. As he whirls with inconceivable rapidity through immeasurable space, spiritual mysteries are revealed to his view—myriads of spirit-peopled worlds, invisible to others, float far and near in this his own heaven. This Shelley means when he says,—

As from a centre dart thy spirit's might,
Beyond all worlds—until its spacious might
Sate the vast circumference—then shrink,
Even as a point within our day and night.

But what succeeds to this unnatural excitement? a prostration, an exhaustion, physical and psychical, like that of one after the paroxysm of a burning fever. It is like the withered *bouquet* on the bosom of beauty after a ball, or more poetically speaking, in the words of one of the German writers, may be compared, as he compares himself when descending to the realities of life, to a skylark, who when he touches the ground, “grovels in silence and clay.”

Shelley had a glorious imagination, but the fire of his genius burned not peacefully and with a steady flame. It was a glaring and irregular flame, for the branches that it fed it with, were not branches from the tree of life, but from another tree that grew in Paradise. What must he have felt who wrote “The Invocation to Misery?”

Well then might Shelley say that thirty years were a long life to a poet—thirty of such years as had summed up in the course of his.

Like Socrates, he united the gentleness of the lamb with the wisdom of the serpent—the playfulness of the boy with the profoundness of the philosopher.

In common with Bacon, whom he greatly admired and studied, he was endowed with a raciness of wit and a keen perception of the ridiculous, that shewed itself not in what we call *humour*, that produces a rude and boisterous mirth, but begat a smile of intellectual enjoyment, much more delightful and refined.

In argument—and he loved to indulge in that exercise, that wrestling of the mind—he was irresistible. His voice was low or loud, his utterance slow or hurried, corresponding with the variety in which his thoughts clothed the subject. Byron was so sensible of his inability to cope with him, that he always avoided coming to a trial of their strength in controversy, which he

generally cut off with a joke or pun ; for Shelley was what Byron could not be, a close, logical, and subtle reasoner, much of which he owed to his early habit of disputation at Oxford, and to his constant study of Plato, whose system of getting his adversary into admissions, and thus entangling him in his own web, he followed. He also owed to Plato the simplicity and lucidity of his style, which he used to call a model for prose. In no individual perhaps was the moral sense ever more completely developed than in Shelley,—in no being was the perception of right and wrong more acute.

His friend Mr. H. says, “The biographer,” to repeat the words in my preface, “who would take upon himself the pleasing and instructive, but delicate task of composing a faithful history of his whole life, will frequently be compelled to discuss the important question, whether his conduct at certain periods was altogether such as ought to be proposed for imitation ; whether he was ever misled by a glowing temperament,

something of hastiness in choice, and a certain constitutional impatience ; whether, like less gifted mortals, he ever shared in the common feature of mortality—repentance ; and to what extent.” I think I have in the phases of his history, sufficiently discussed these questions, have shewn how grievously he repented his first hasty marriage—how severely he taxed himself for its melancholy termination—and how much it cankered and festered the wounds which his sensitive spirit received from the shafts of invidious critics and the persecution of the world.

If any human being was possessed of what I have heard Phrenologists say is so rarely found developed in the human head, conscienciousness, it was Shelley ; by which is meant, not doing to others as one would be dealt by—not a mere strict regard to right and justice ; but where no such claims existed, the exercise, to his own detriment, of an active and unwearied benevolence. He was unselfish, unworldly, disinterested in the highest degree—he despised the universal idol at

which all bow down—gold ; he looked upon it as dross, and often and often suffered privations without regret, from his inability to resist appeals to his purse. Indeed he carried his beneficence so far, that Mrs. Shelley says in other but stronger words, that he damaged by it his fortune, and frequently reduced himself to the greatest pecuniary straits. With a generous regard to the interests of his friends, he not only relieved their necessities, but looked to their future interests. He was, it is true, no very clear-sighted politician, for he says to his friend Mr. Gisborne,—“ I wish your money out of the Funds ; the middle course you speak of [what that was is unexplained] and which will probably take place, will amount, not to your losing all your income, or retaining all, but having the half taken away !” And again : What gives me *considerable anxiety*, is the continuance of your property in the British Funds *at this crisis of approaching* ”

What Shelley means regarding his own affairs is ambiguous. “ The best thing we can do, is to

save money, and if things take a decided turn, which I am convinced they will at last, but not perhaps for *two* or *three* years, it will be time for me to assert my rights and preserve my *annuity*."

All this was written in 1819 and 1820. But there is a passage in one of the last letters he ever wrote, which might have been penned at the present moment.—“England appears,” he says, “to be in a desperate condition—Ireland still worse ; and no class of those who subsist on the public labour, will be persuaded that *their* claims on it must be diminished. But the government must content itself with less taxes, the *land-owner must submit to receive less rent*, and the fund-holder a diminished interest, or *they will get nothing* ;” and he adds,—“I see little public virtue, and foresee that the contest will be one of *blood and gold* !”

The sincerity of Shelley’s speculative opinions was proved by the willingness with which he submitted unflinchingly to obloquy and reproach.

in order to inculcate them. "Firmness and gentleness united in him without destroying each other," and he would have undergone the martyrdom he depicts in Laon and Cythna, rather than have renounced one tittle of his faith. He attributed "the vice and misery of mankind to the degradation of the many for the benefit of the few—to an unnatural state of society—to a general misgovernment in its rulers,—to the superstition and bigotry of a mercenary and insincere priesthood." With a poet's eye he foresaw a millennium, the perfection of the human race, when man would be happy, free, and majestic. Loving virtue for its own sake, and not from fear, he thought with Schiller, no other ties were necessary than the restraint imposed by a consciousness of right and wrong implanted in our natures, and could not, or would not see that in the present condition of the world, and in the default of education, such a system was fallacious. His tenets therefore should have been looked upon as those of Owen

of Lanark with us, of St. Simon in France, of Paulus and Strauss in Germany, as the aspirations of the philanthropist ; and the critic might have said with Byron,

“ You talk Utopias,”

instead of calumniating the man, and attributing to his harmless speculations, (harmless from their being beyond the capacities of the *οἱ πολλοί*,) the desire of corrupting youth, which could with as little justice have been said of him, as it was untrue of Socrates.

He was an advocate for the abolition of the punishment of death, and has left us a short treatise on that subject that is of great value ; his principal argument is, the bad effect of public executions, the putting to torture for the amusement of those who may or may not have been injured, the criminal ; and he contends that as a measure of punishment strictly so considered, and as an exhibition, which by its known effects on the susceptibility of the sufferer

is intended to intimidate the spectators from incurring a similar liability, it is singularly inadequate, and confirms all the unsocial impulses of men;" and he adds, "that those nations among whom the penal code has been particularly mild, have been distinguished from all others by the rarity of crime, and that governments that derive their institutions from the existence of circumstances of barbarism and violence, with some exceptions, perhaps, are bloody in proportion as they are despotic, and form the manners of their subjects to a sympathy with their own spirit."

Disheartened as he was by his constant failures, and the disappointment of his efforts for the amelioration of the social condition of the working classes, he did not despond or despair. There was an energy in him that rose with oppression, and his last as well as his first aspiration was for the good of his species.

Unsoured by the ingratitude of the world, he

carried into his solitude no misanthropy, against his persecutors he never breathed a word of resentment or hostility. His critics he despised not, rather he pitied, and said to one, "Grass may grow in wintry weather, as soon as hate in me."

Suffering at times from tortures the most excruciating, from a complaint that would ultimately have proved fatal, during his worst spasms he never shewed himself peevish, or out of humour.

So good and great, beneficent and wise
On his high throne,
How meekly has he borne his faculties,
How finely shewn
A model to the irritable race,
Of generous kindness, courtesy and love.

He was an enemy to all sensuality. The pleasures of the table, that form the *summum bonum* of the herd, were not his pleasures. His diet was that of a hermit, his drink water, and his principal and favourite food, bread. His

converse was as chaste as his morals.—all grossness he abominated.

De Quincey on Gilfillan, says, that “of the darkest beings we are told they believe and tremble, but that Shelley believed and hated. Never was there a more unjust aspersion. He was of all men the most sincere, and nothing ever seduced him into falsehood or dissimulation. He *disbelieved*, and hated not—not Christ himself, or his doctrines, but Christianity as established in the world, i.e. its teachers. It is also asserted in that review, that when the subject of Christianity was started, Shelley’s total nature was altered and darkened, and transfiguration fell upon him; that he who was so gentle became savage, he that breathed by the very lungs of Christianity, that was so merciful, so full of tenderness and pity of humanity, and love and forgiveness, then raved and screamed like an idiot.” Such might have occurred immediately after his expulsion, when in Cumberland, and when stung to the quick by what he deemed his

cruel wrongs, and when writing the Notes to Queen Mab, but when I saw him in 1820 and 1821, I can vouch for his betraying no midsummer madness—such exaggerated and frantic paroxysms of rage.

I cannot help thinking, not to speak of his want of religious education at home, that Shelley's cruel expulsion by the teachers of that gospel which proclaims toleration, and forgiveness of others, produced in a great measure his scepticism, which became more inveterate by the decree of the Court of Chancery, which he calls a "priestly pest;" a decree which severed the dearest tie of humanity—made him childless; that the bitter and merciless review of his *Revolt of Islam* by a divine, and the persecution of his brethren, including Dr. Nott, who left no stone unturned to malign and vilify and blacken his character, hardened him still more in his unbelief; nor can it be denied, that he blindly attributed the *auto da fés*, the "Sicilian Vespers," the "Massacre of St. Bartholemew," the cruelties inflicted on the

Hugonots, not to mention the horrors committed by Catholics against Protestants, and Protestants against Catholics in our own country, under the name of Christianity,—to Christianity itself. Living for so many years in Italy, did not tend to change his creed. He says in his Preface to the Cenci, that “in the mind of an Italian, the Catholic religion is adoration, faith, submission, penitence, blind adoration, not a rule for moral conduct, and has no necessary connection with any one virtue ;” and adds,—“that intensely pervading the whole frame of society, it is, according to the temper of the mind it inhabits, a passion, a persuasion, an excuse, never a check ;” on which Leigh Hunt remarks,—“that such religions, in furnishing men with excuses and absolution, do but behave with something like decent kindness, for they are bound to do what they can for the vices they produce ;” and concludes with, “we can say it with gravity too,—Forgiveness will make its way somehow everywhere, and it is lucky that

it will do so. But it would be luckier if systems made less to forgive!"

To such a length did Shelley's hostility to what he calls the popular religion carry him, that he said, "he had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon, than saved with Paley and Malthus."* But Shelley by no means stood alone among poets in his principles or infidelity. Milton was engaged with a party in the destruction of the Church and the Monarchy. Schiller introduced on the stage, as we exhibit the priests and incense of the Gods of Greece, the most sacred rite of the church. His æsthetic philosophy was anything but Christian. Göthe never made a mystery of his unbelief. Almost all the great thinkers of Germany are, with the last object of their idolatry, Pantheists. But it was allowed to the poets and painters of Greece and Rome, to dare anything, and shall we in the

* Errare, rehercle, malo cum Platone, quam cum istis sentire.—*Cicero*.

nineteenth century not be ashamed of intolerance? Is Milton's Arianism, the Titanic language of his Satan, a reason for our not reading the *Paradise Lost*? Are Schiller and Göthe less esteemed, are their works less popular, on account of their persuasions? Has there ever been a finger raised against them in their own or any other country? Are not Joan d'Arc, Marie Stuart, and Faust, still represented on the German stage? Has not the latter drama been translated repeatedly into English in spite of the daring Prologue in Heaven, and the mockery of all things sacred contained in that surprising effort of genius? And shall Shelley be less read because when a boy (what did Moore and Southey write in their youth?) he wrote *Queen Mab*? What was Byron? Are not *Cain* and *Don Juan* in every library? and shall we ostracise from ours, on account of passages which do not square with our own views, the noblest, the sublimest, and sweetest effusions of genius? Let us not stand alone among the nations, or be marked with the

finger of scorn by the Americans and Germans, for refusing our tribute to his genius.

“In my father’s house,” says our Saviour, “are many mansions,” which, though the commentators differ in the interpretation of the text, obviously means, that there are many quiet resting places in heaven, for those differing in opinion on religion, and there it may be hoped with confidence, that Shelley has found “an abode, where the Eternal are.” How sublime are his own words,—

Death is the veil which those who live, call life,
They sleep—and it is lifted.

In having thus summed up my own sentiments on Shelley, if there should be any one who thinks I have taken a too poetical view of his character, let him read, and inwardly digest the following passage of one of the most elegant of the American writers, and who has well studied the human heart. It is worthy of being inscribed in letters of gold.

“Let us tread lightly on the Poet’s grave!”
For my part I confess that I have not the heart to take him from the general crowd of erring, sinful men, and judge him harshly. The little I have seen of the world, and know of the history of mankind, teaches me to look upon the errors of others in sorrow, and not in anger. When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptations it has passed, the brief pulsations of joy, the feverish inquietude of hope and fear, the tears of regret, the feebleness of purpose, the pressure of want, the desertion of friends, the scorn of a world that has little charity, the desolation of the soul’s sanctuary, and threatening voices within,—health gone, happiness gone, even hope that stays the longest with us, gone; I would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow man with Him from whose hands it came.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

THE IDEAL AND THE ACTUAL.

Ever serene, and chrystal pure, and even,
 Mid joys that never fail in Heaven,
 Light as the Zephyr's wing flows life away ;
 Moons wax and wane,—glides to one common doom
 Race after race, youth's godlike roses bloom
 In endless reproduction and decay,—
 An anxious choice is left to all below,
 'Twixt sensual raptures and the soul's pure love ;
 Both blend, and lighten on the brow
 Of the high Powers, that reign with mighty Jove.

Wouldst thou on earth vie with the immortal gods,
 Be free to roam in Death's abodes,
 Oh ! pluck not fruit from its forbidden tree !
 Enough your eye should banquet on the sight :
 Excess, revenging by its speedy flight,
 Mocks joys, all lasting as they seem to be.

Not Styx, although it nine times circled round,
 Locked Ceres' child in Pluto's dread domain ;
She seized the apple, and was wound,
By just decree, in Hell's eternal chain.

Subject alone this body to the powers
That rule o'er destiny's dark hours ;
 But free from all the influences of Time,
With happy natures the transfigured sprite
Sports joyously amid the fields of light,
 A god with gods in their celestial clime.
Wouldst thou upon its pinions mount on high,
 Unlearn the anxious cares of earth to feel,
From this poor hollow being fly
 To brighter worlds,—the realms of the Ideal.

For ever young, released from Earth's gross dreams,
Floats on Perfection's glorious beams
 Humanity's godlike phantasm here revealed ;
That vision, like life's silent phantoms seems,
That wander, glancing round the Stygian streams,
 Or as they stand in some Elysian field,
Ere mounting from the melancholy bier,
 The immortal disemprisoned soars, and free.
If Conflict's scales on earth are balanced, here
 In all its glories shines the victory.

Not to unnerve the body spent with toil,
The limbs from struggle to uncoil,
 The wreath of victory waves below, of power

Life, when the sinews have relaxed their strain,
To tear man on, down to a stormy main,
Time in its whirling vortex to devour.
But from the lists, with shuddering and affright,
Should the wing flag that lifted high the soul,
Then gaze with feelings of delight,
From Beauty's sphere, upon the vanquished goal.
If worth the aim to rule or to defend,
With stormy passions men contend,
The palm of fame, or virtue's meed to gain ;
And resolution must enkindle force,
When meet the whirring chariots in the course,
And clash and clatter on the dusty plain.
Daring, and that alone applause can wring,
Who beckons onward to the arduous goal,
And when sinks low the craven's wing,
The man of purpose strong will Fate control.
The firm of soul, who dauntlessly defies
The breakers wild that round him rise,
Down life's smooth current safely floats, till borne
To the far scenes of the still land of dream,
Where on the silver current of the stream
Mirror themselves, soft twilight, Eve and Morn.
In love's sweet interchange dissolved, and blest
With all the charm a union free bestows,
In reconcilment here are hushed to rest
Those passions, once our most inveterate foes.
Should, to awake the dead with plastic might,
Itself with matter to unite,

With embryo deeds impregnate, genius glow,
Then let thy nerves with tireless strain be bent,
And wrestling with the insensate element,
Thought and Reflection tame the stubborn foe.
From zeal that knows not age, that bides no yoke,
Wells forth Truth's fount from its deep hidden vein,
And at the chisel's heavy stroke,
Submissive yields the marble's brittle grain.

Then onward to the World of Beauty strain :
And in the dust will back remain,
Weight, with the matter whence itself it owes ;
Not from the mass, as if by torture wrung,
But æry light, as if from nothing sprung,
Before the enchanted eyes the image glows.
All doubts that rack—all strife that vexes, here,
In Victory's sure reward are hushed to peace,
And in that unimagined sphere,
Earth's wants and weaknesses for ever cease.

When in the nakedness of False and True,
Before the Law, to meet your due
You stand ; when Guilt draws nigh the Holy One,
Before Truth's lightning arrows then turn pale ;
Before the Ideal let your virtue quail,
In shame of deeds your conscience well might shun
This goal has never reached one mortal man,
To cross that whirlpool has no boat been found,
That wide abyss no bridge can span,
No anchor reach the unfathomable ground.

But for the trammels of the senses, change
Free thoughts, and as they boundless range,
The fearful vision will be chased and flown,
And that eternal whirlpool yawn no more :
Wrestle with Godhead by your will's own power,
And hurl him from his universal throne.
The fetters of the law are strong to bind
But slaves, the scorn of him the good and free,
Who by the might of his own mind
Can set at nought Jove's dreaded majesty.

If pangs humanity wrestles with in vain,
Coil round thee—if it clasp and strain
Like Priam's son, in its despair, the snakes,
Let man revolt against the will of Heaven,
Shake with its loud lament its vault, till riven
Each feeling breast with tenderest pity aches.
Let Nature's fearful voice victorious rise,—
Make pale the cheek of joy with anguish deep,
Till bending downwards from the skies,
In holy sympathy the Immortals weep.

But in the cloudless regions of the blest,
Where the pure forms of spirits rest,
The waves of Lamentation roll no more ;
No pangs the soul can dare to torture here ;
In pain and sorrow never flows a tear,
For lo ! the soul by its resistive power,

As Iris pierces with her sunfire bow
The heavy thunder-clouds of vaporous dew,
Gleams thro' the dusky veil of wo,
In the clear calm of Heaven's ethereal blue.

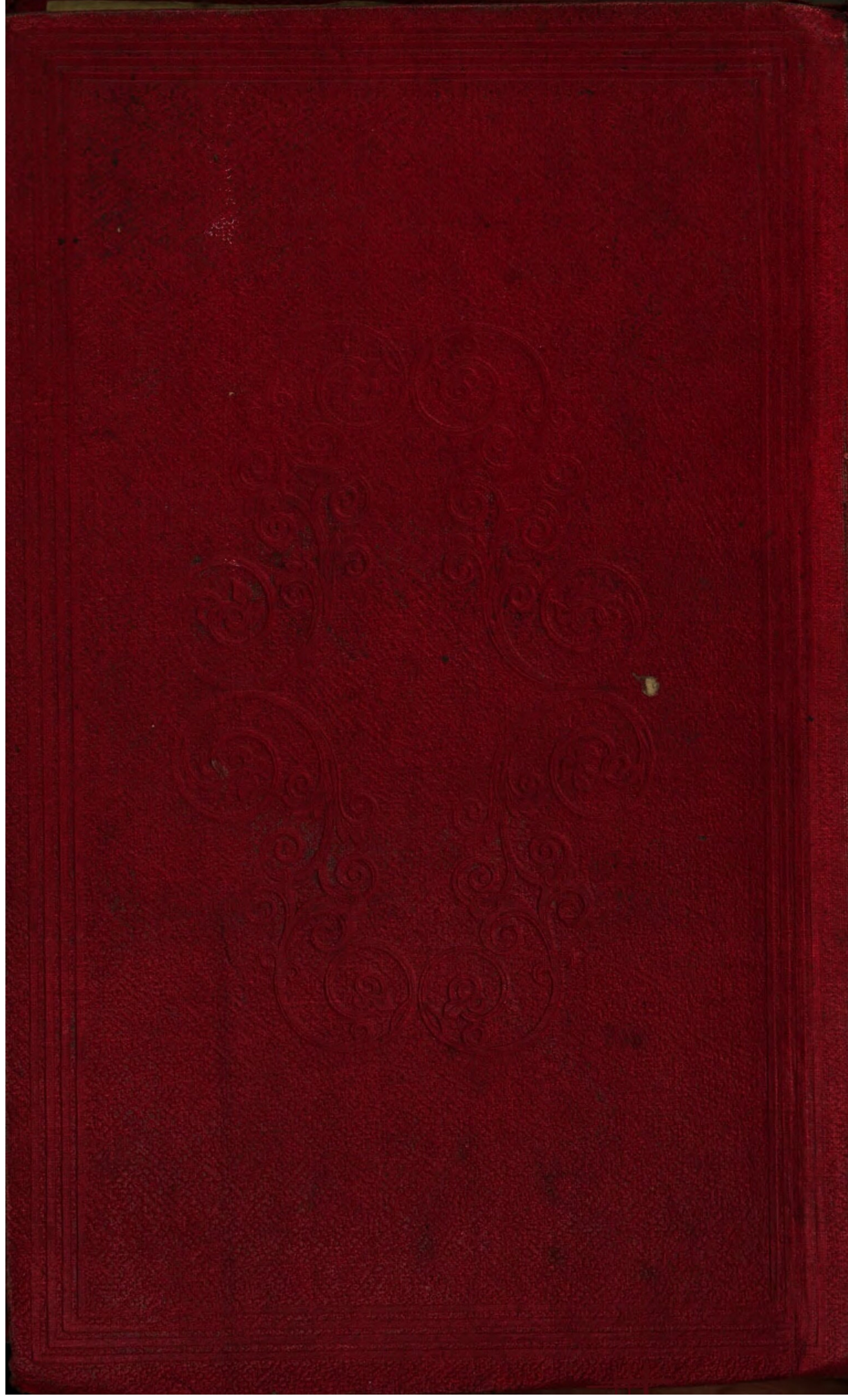
Atrides trod the difficult path of life,
And waged a never-ceasing strife
With slaves effeminate, humbled to a slave,
Strangled the Hydras, many a monster-foe
Subdued, and plunged to free his friend below,
Crossing in spectral bark the sleepy wave.
All pangs that on mortality could weigh,
The irreconcilable goddess in her hate
Did on his willing shoulders lay,
Till run the mortal course assigned by Fate.

Until divested of his load of clay,
He mounts from this low earth away,
And pure and ever purer ether drinks,
And as on new and unaccustomed wings,
Higher and higher still he hovering springs,
Earth's heavy phantasm sinks, and sinks and sinks,
The glorified to Cronian's blest abode
Olympus hails with harmonies divine,
And blooming Hebe to the god
Presents a goblet of nectareous wine.

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